BIG COMICS SPECIAL

教師暴行録

Yukinobu Hoshino Presents

星野之宣

第七集

BIG COMICS SPECIAL

THE CASE RECORDS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

宗像教授異考録

Munakata Kyouju Ikouroku

Collection 7

第七集

星野之宣

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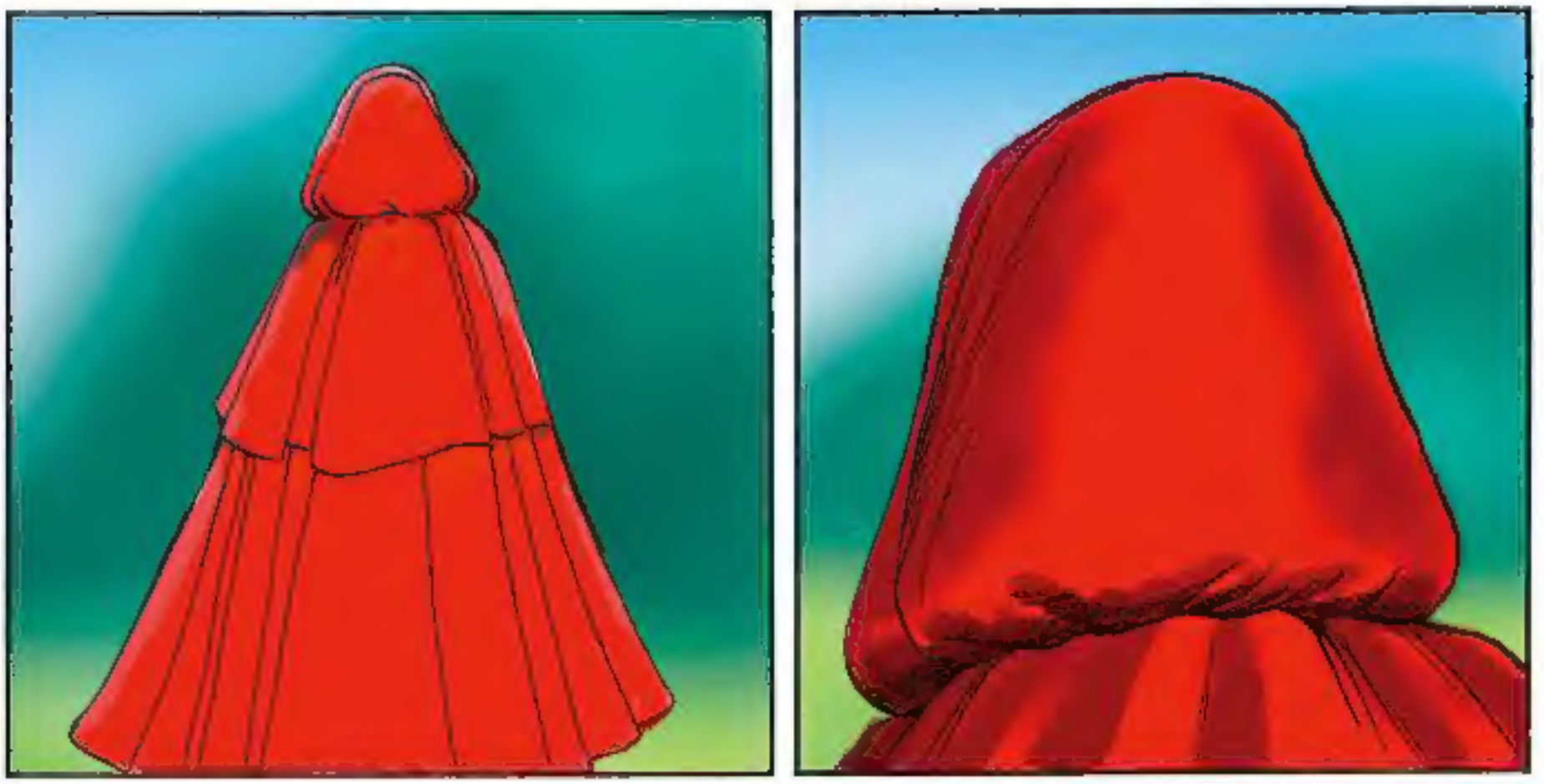
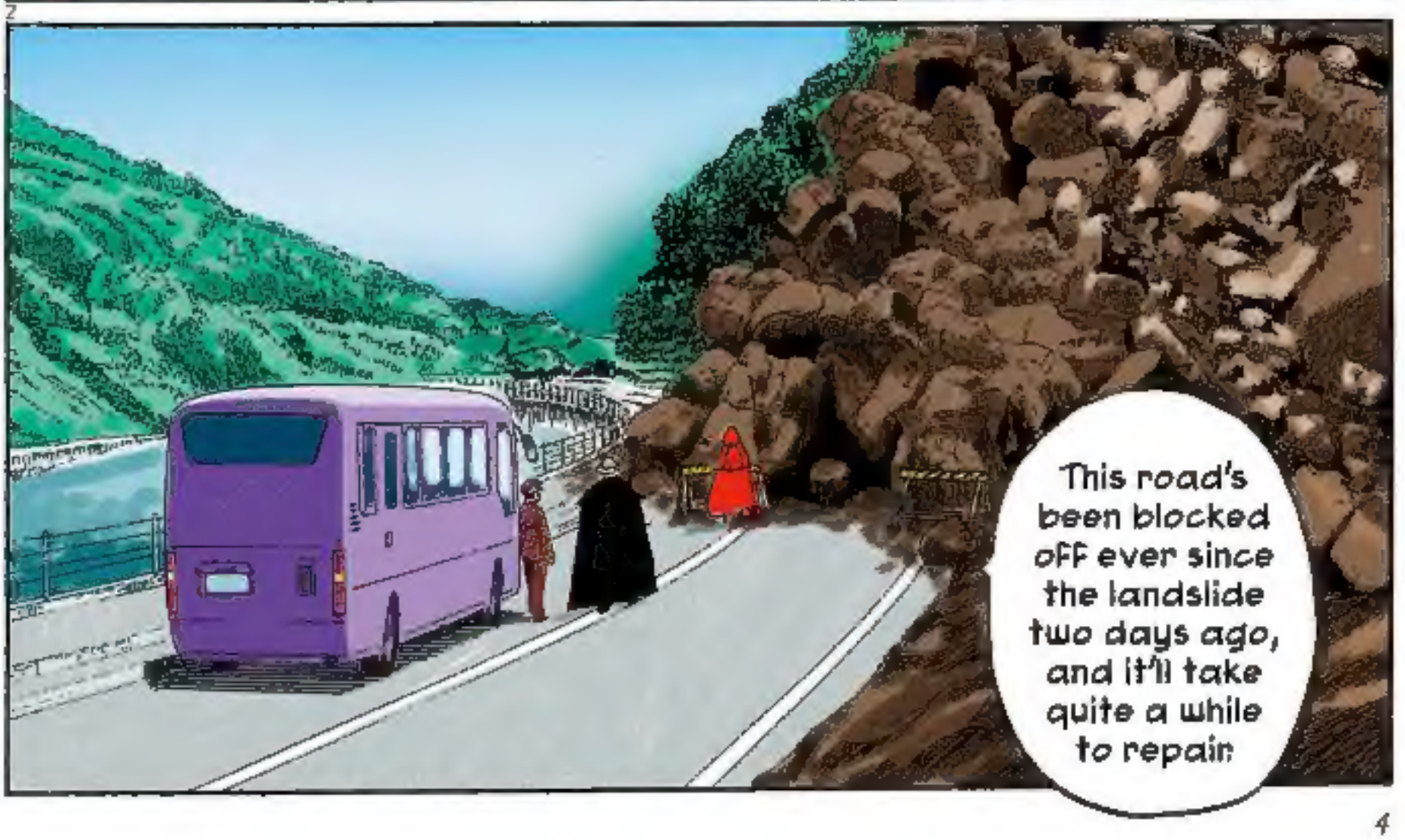
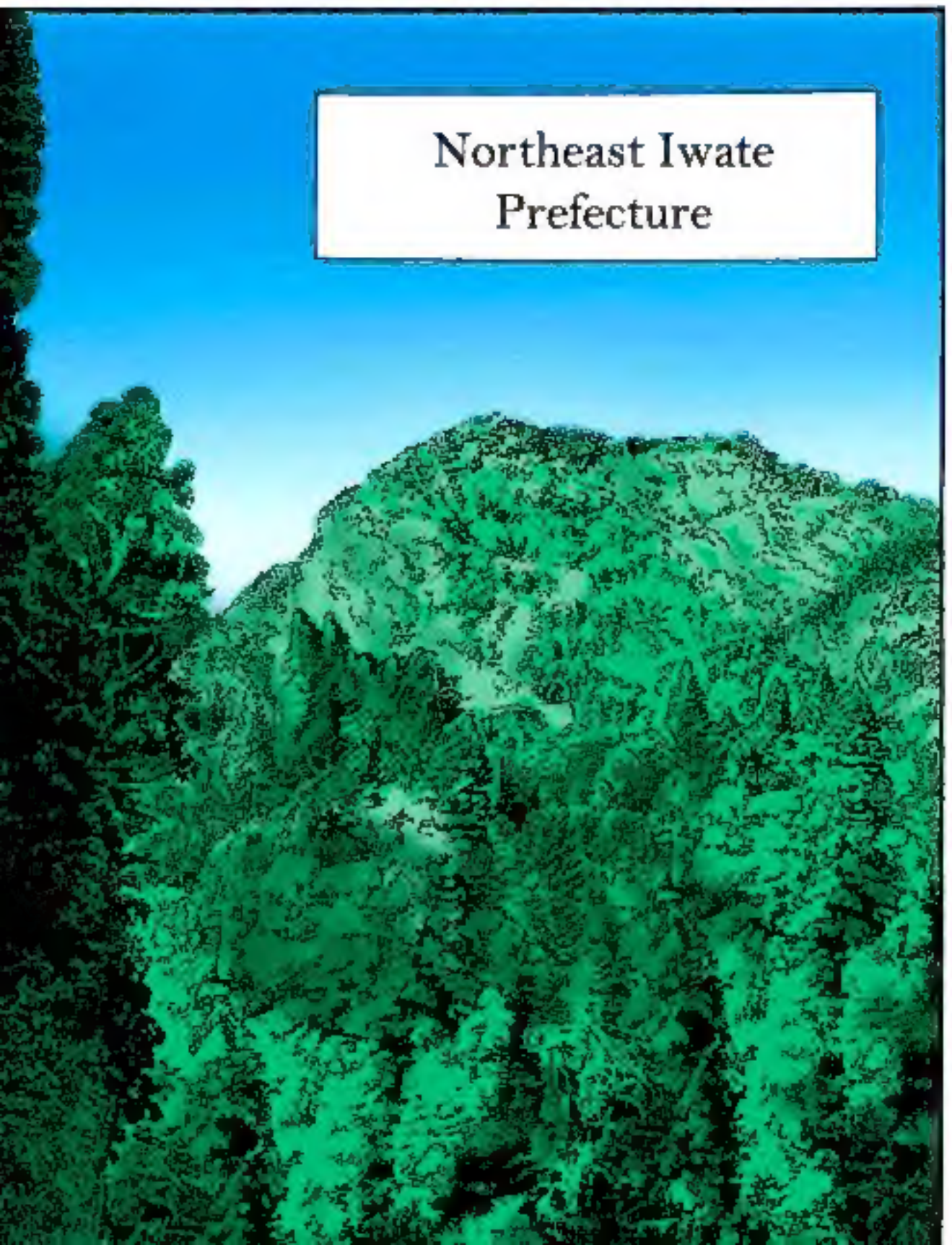
CHAPTER 20:
RED MEMORIES




This road's been blocked off ever since the landslide two days ago, and it'll take quite a while to repair

Well, it's a bit of a detour, but if you take the side road through the mountains, you'll end up in G------ Village in about three hours.

Is there ano-ther way?


Northeast Iwate Prefecture

Three hours...

Sometimes in life, you encounter a series of invisible and coinciding gambits, which give you the feeling that you're walking further and further into a "trap".

when she suddenly visited me at the university.

Now that I look back, it was all set off by Isabella Hart...

Pro-Fessor Muna-kata!

I'm so glad to see you again!

I... Isabella!?

You've aided my companion in Fukushima, and you led me to an un-anticipated discovery. You have my gratitude.

I've come to visit a friend in Tokyo, and I wanted to see you before I went back.

I'm Muna-kata's niece, Taki.

Thank you. Oh, you have such a pretty daughter.

PFFF FFFt!

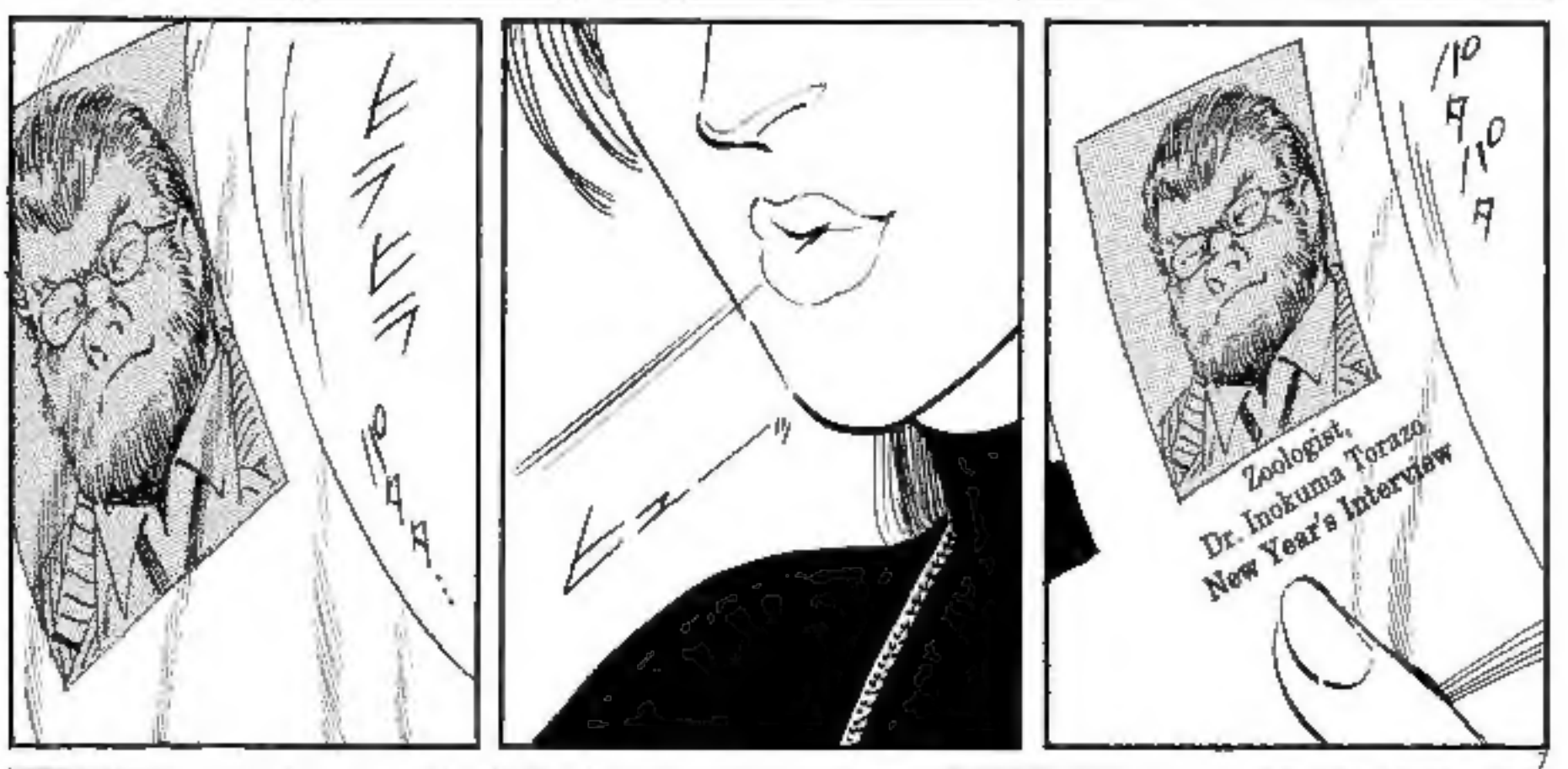
Professor Munakata, how would you like to accompany me to a village in the mountains of Tohoku for the next two or three days?

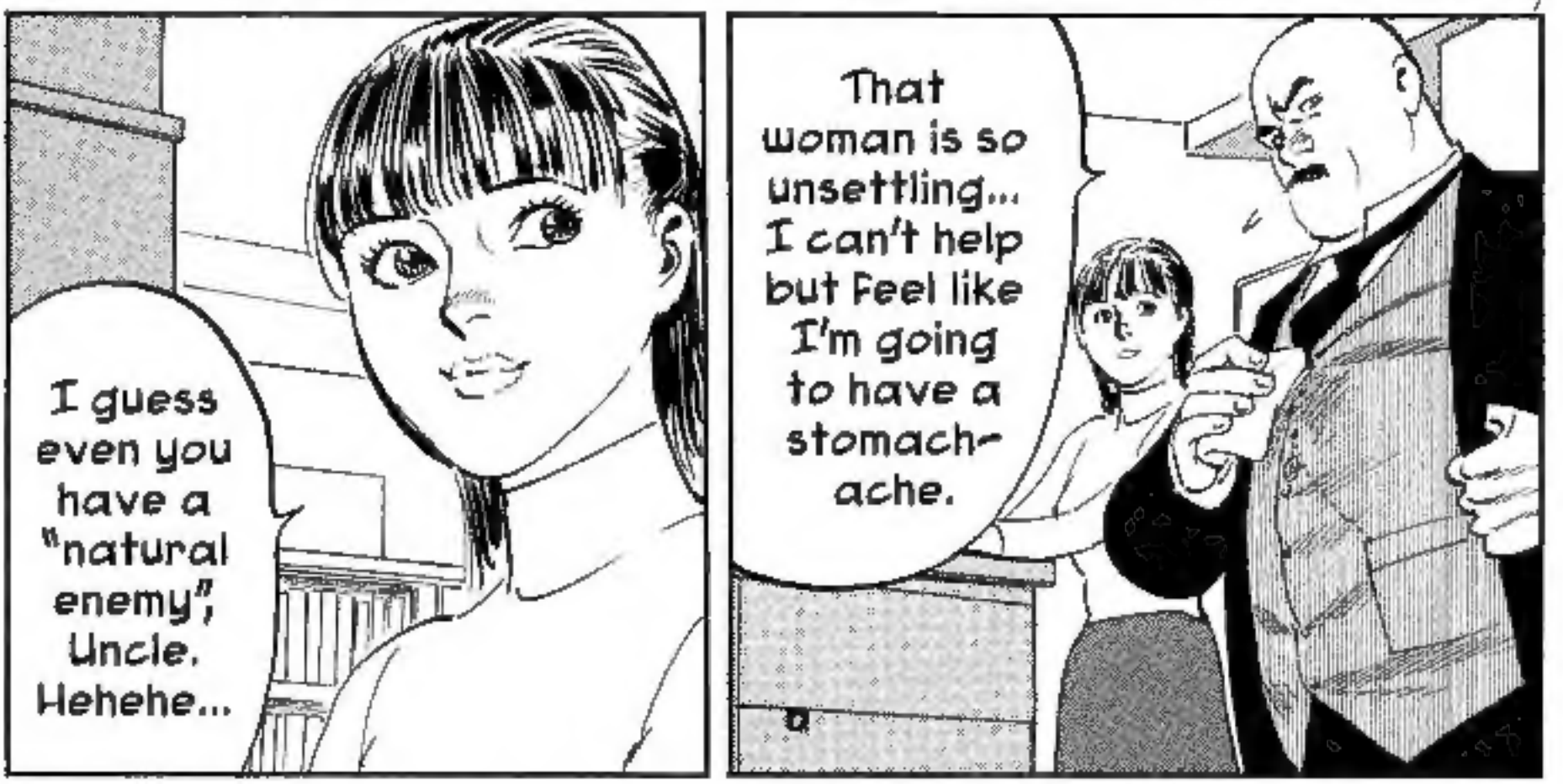
T...That sure came out of the blue! I'm afraid I've got a magazine interview tomorrow, so I can't leave Tokyo...

Yeo-wch ...

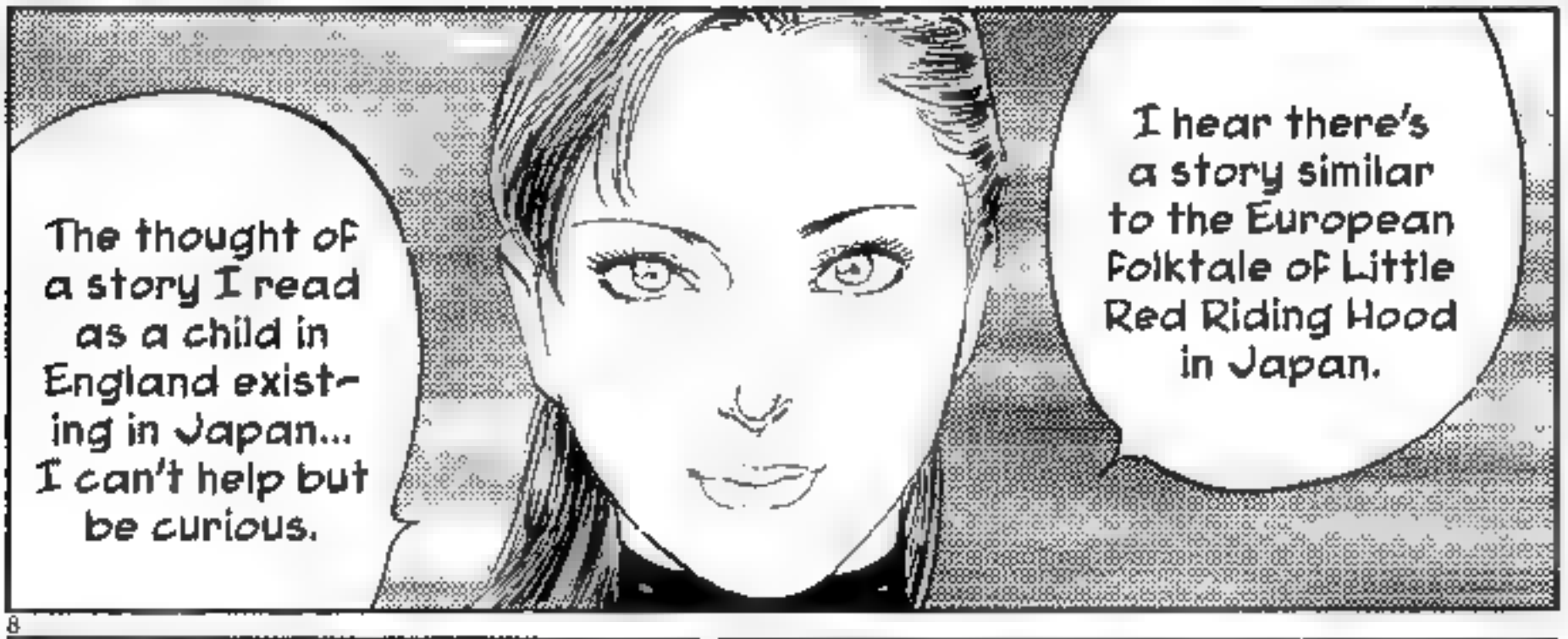
An interview... With who?

Monthly Folkloris
Excuse me for a second ...
I'm talking about "boars", this year's zodiac animal, with a zoologist named Inokuma... I know it's a rather boring project, but look, here's the announce-ment photo.


Zoologist, Dr. Inokuma Torazo. New Year's Interview

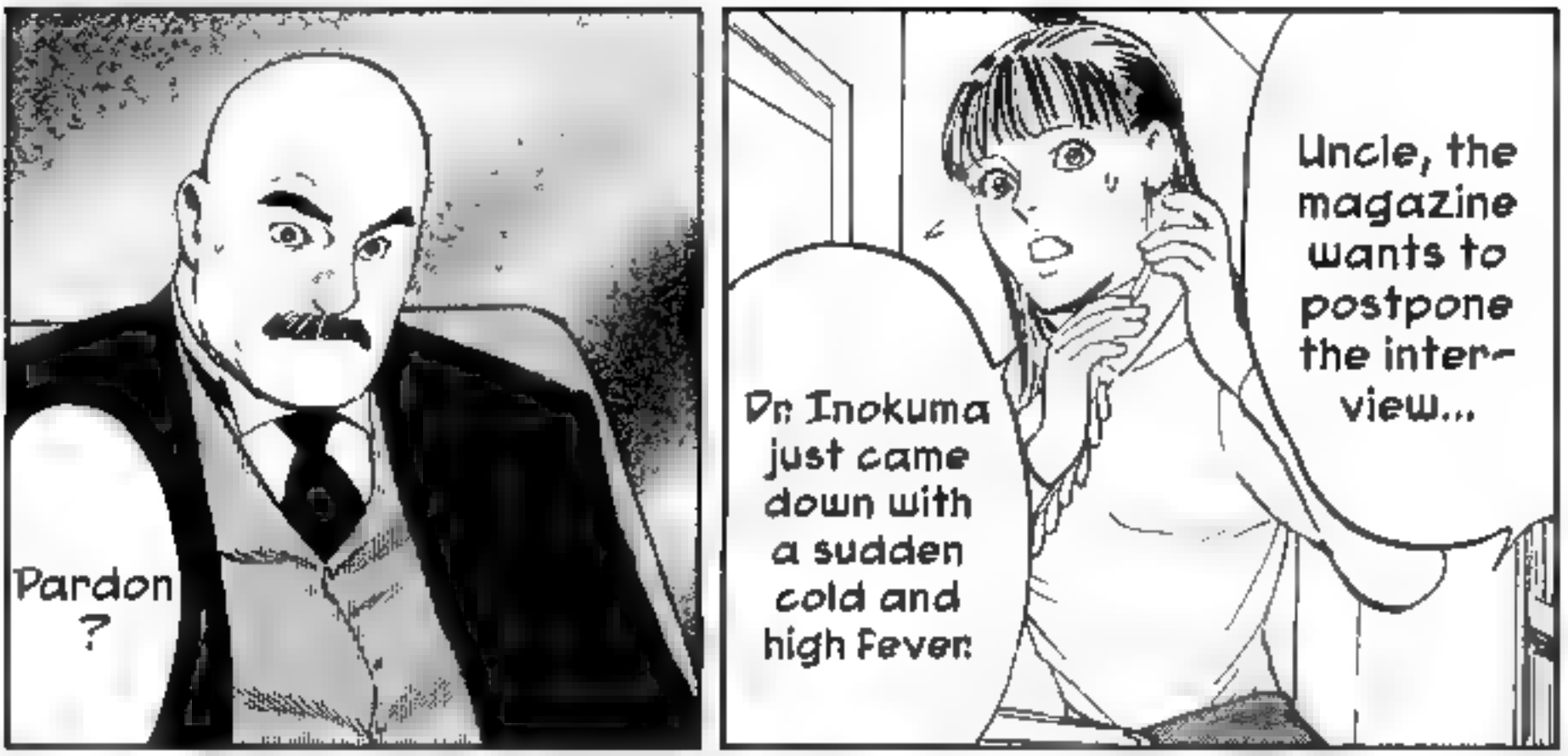

I guess even you have a "natural enemy", Uncle. Hehehe...
That woman is so unsettling... I can't help but feel like I'm going to have a stomach-ache.

"Little Red Riding Hood"?

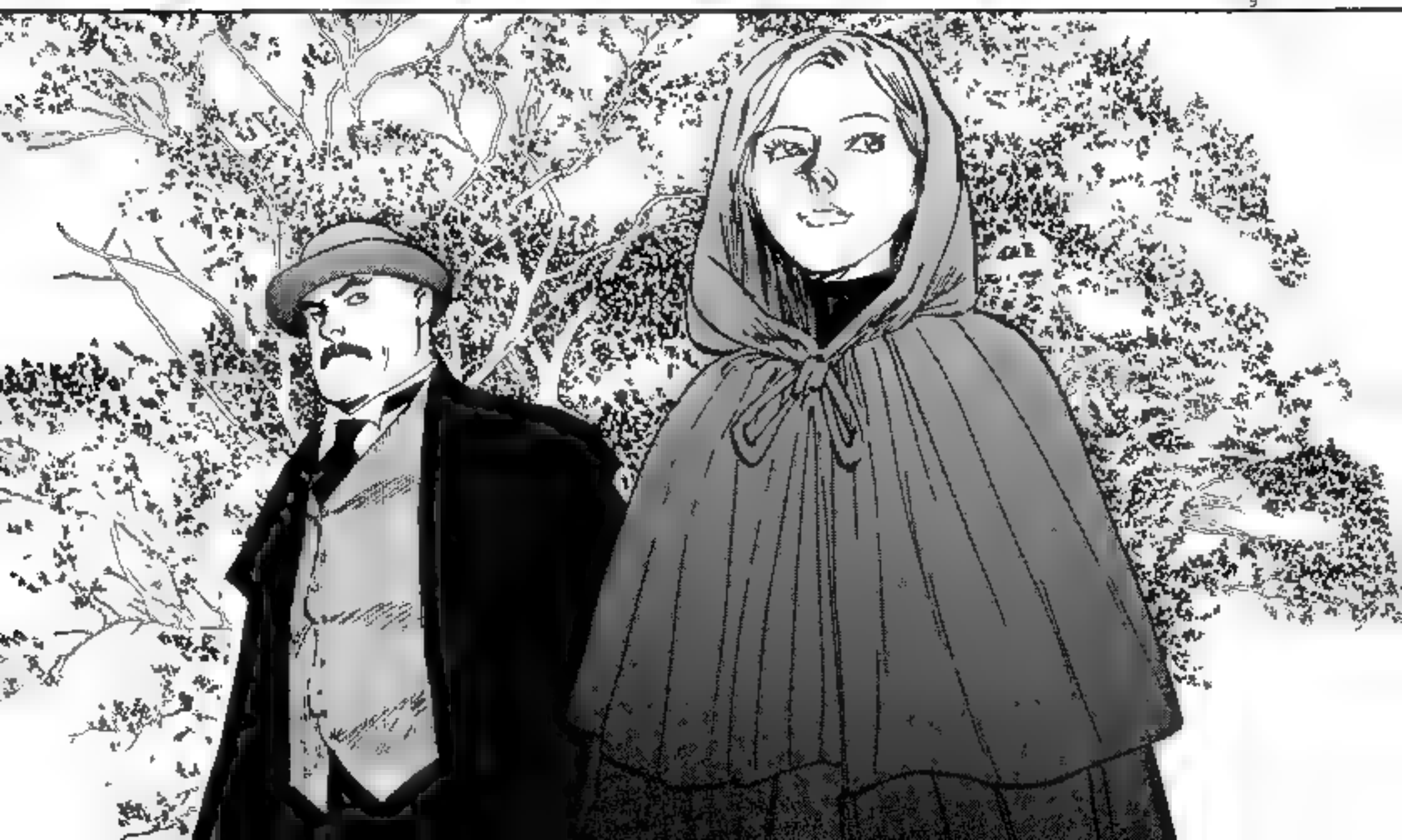

The thought of a story I read as a child in England existing in Japan... I can't help but be curious.
I hear there's a story similar to the European folktale of Little Red Riding Hood in Japan.

One of her old relatives that lives in a village in Iwate knows a lot of old folktales, and she's offered to tell us about them...

I suppose it wouldn't be that much of a stretch...
I heard it from a woman in a herb-growing circle in Fukushima, and we made an arrangement.

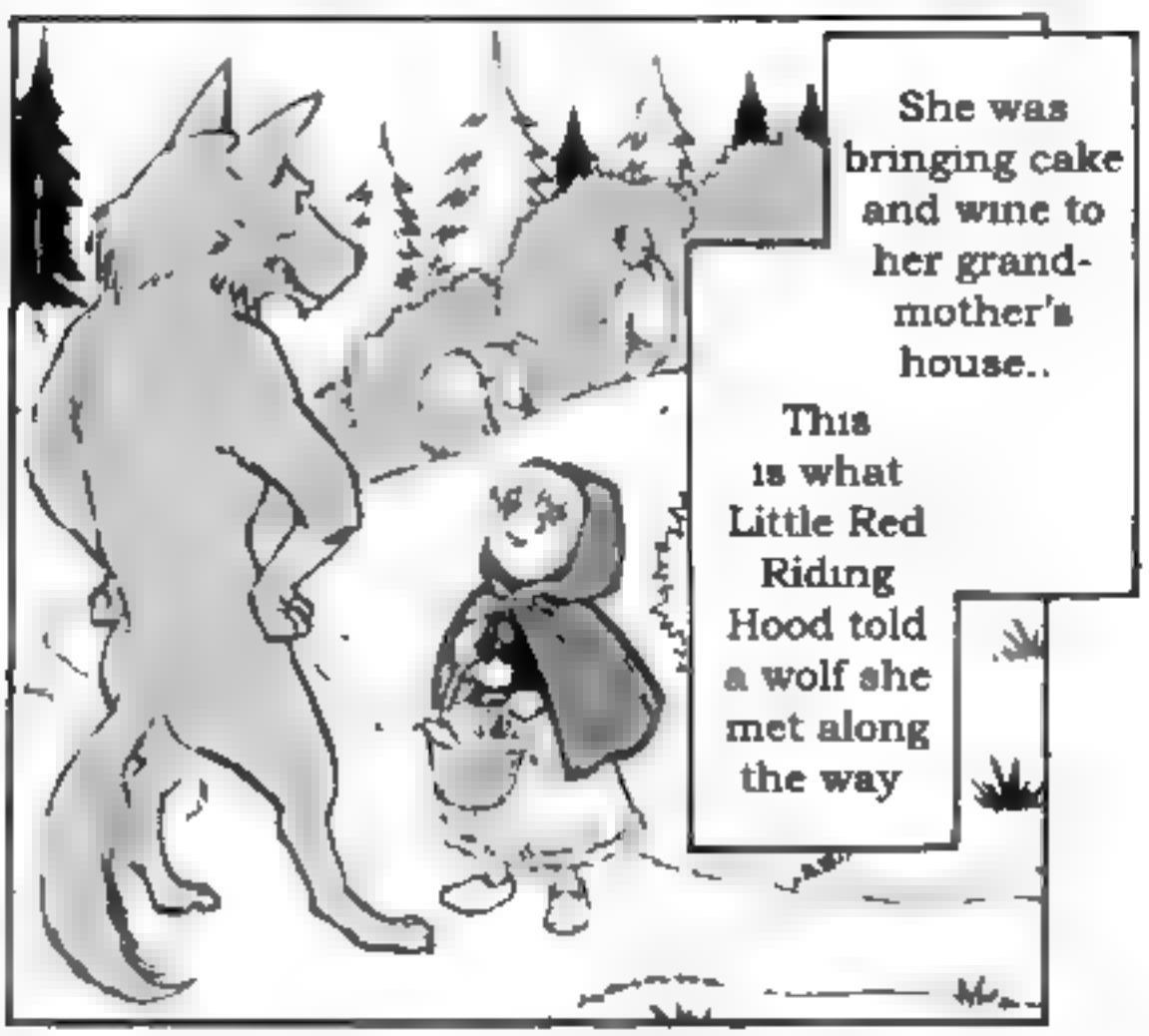

Pardon ?
Dr Inokuma just came down with a sudden cold and high fever.
Uncle, the magazine wants to postpone the interview...

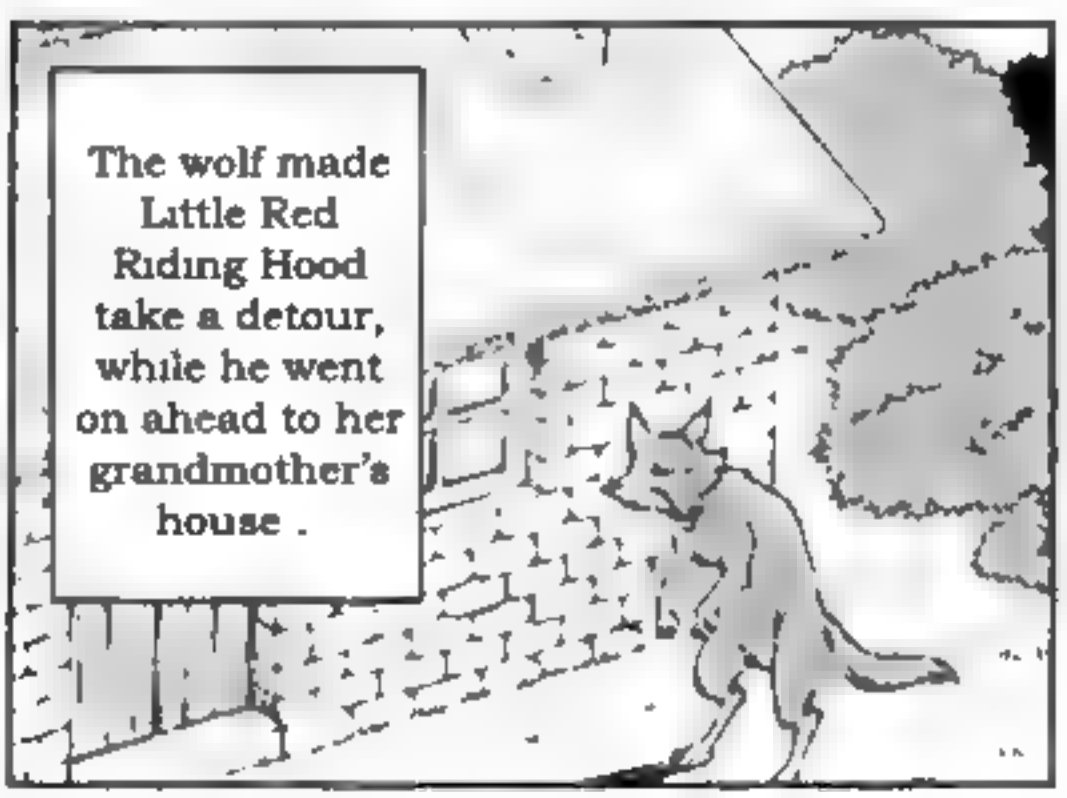
.....
It seems there's a bad cold going around...



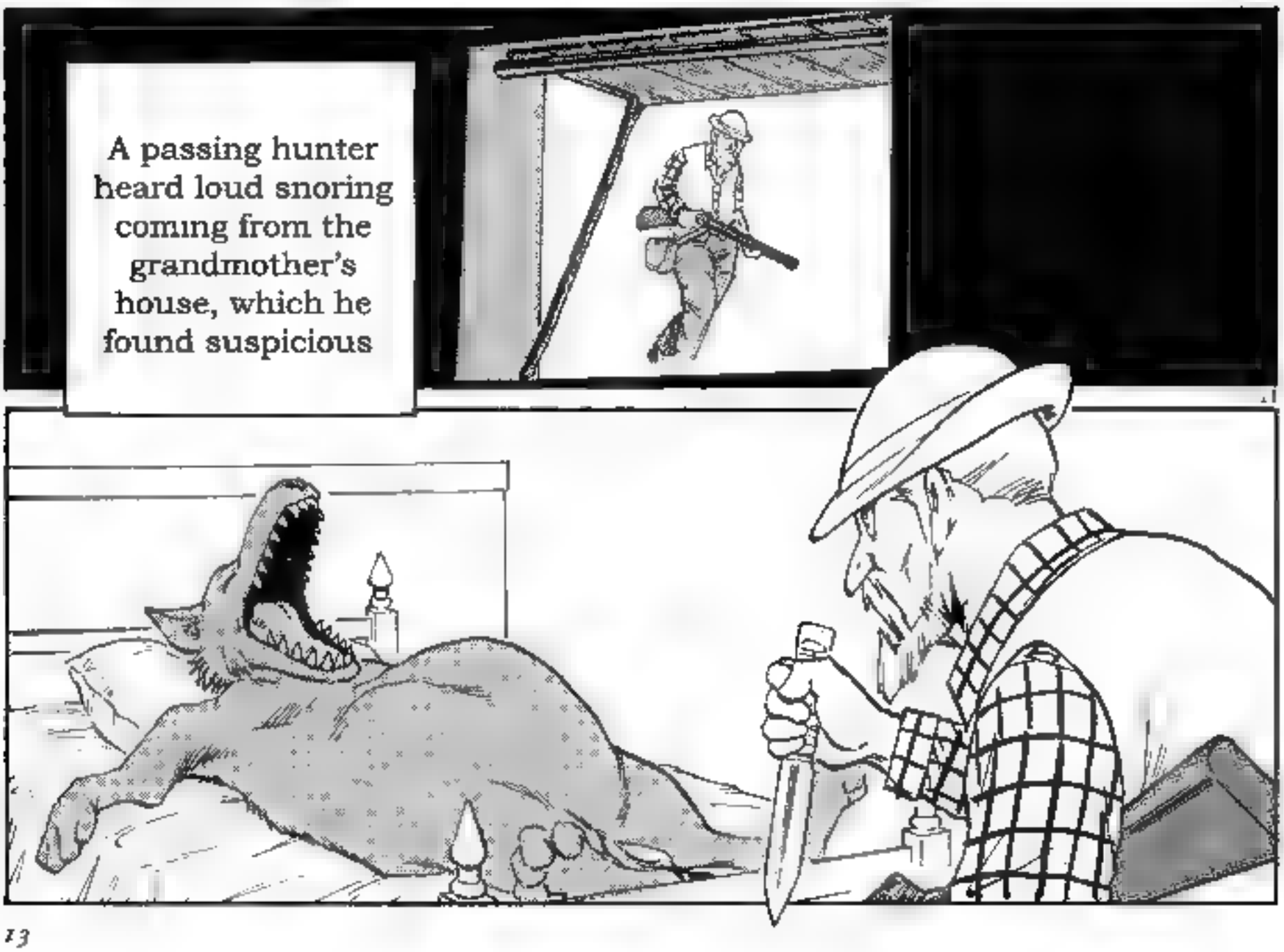
Once upon a time, a little girl named "Little Red Riding Hood", who wore a red hooded cape, went into the forest

He tricked the bedridden grandmother into letting him in the house, and swallowed her up whole


She was bringing cake and wine to her grand-mother's house..
This is what Little Red Riding Hood told a wolf she met along the way


The wolf made Little Red Riding Hood take a detour, while he went on ahead to her grandmother's house .

When Little Red Riding Hood finally made it to the house, she approached the bed with the wolf, now disguised as her grandmother...


A passing hunter heard loud snoring coming from the grandmother's house, which he found suspicious

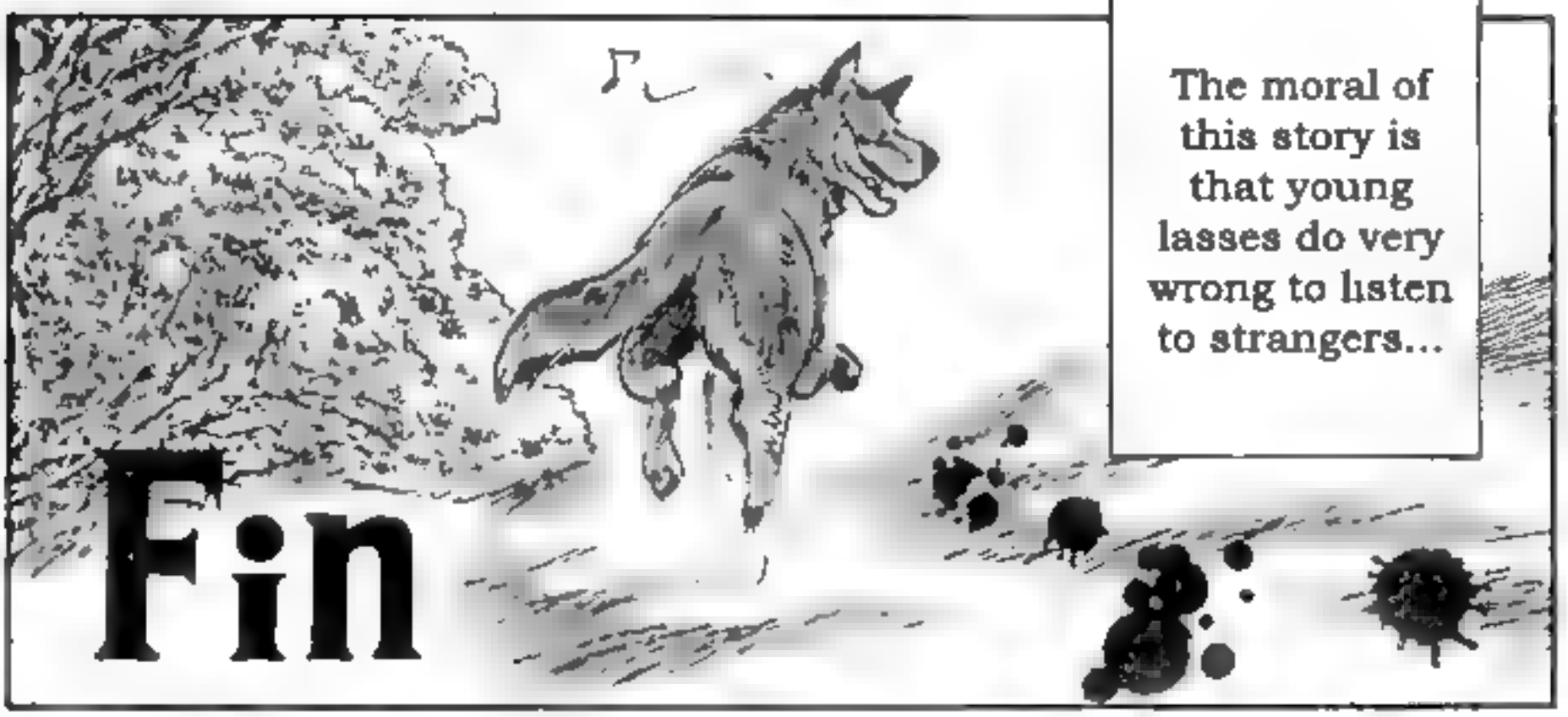
Little Red Riding Hood and the grandmother were saved, and they filled the wolf's stomach with heavy rocks until he died... And they all lived happily ever after!

This is the story of "Little Red Riding Hood", as popularized by Grimm's Fairy Tales.

But it appears that this was originally a French folktale that was slightly altered for children when the 19th-century German Grimm Brothers were compiling their Fairy tales.

Two hundred years earlier Perrault's fairy tale of Little Red Riding Hood from 17th-Century France had quite a different conclusion.

Little Red Riding Hood had finally arrived at her grandmother's house, but by then the wolf had already eaten her grandmother, and was lying in wait for her


Fin
The moral of this story is that young lasses do very wrong to listen to strangers...

I see. I think I can understand why the Grimm Brothers wanted to change it to a happy ending...

So in the older form, there is no hunter and Little Red Riding Hood and her grandmother are not saved...

The further you go back, the bloodier they become...
Modern fairy tales may have changed, but a great deal of the original fairy tales have brutal scenes or tragic endings.

Ohhhh, "Urikohime"! That's the story I came to hear about!

Even in Japan, the folk tales regarded as being of the same branch as Little Red Riding Hood all reek of blood.

Like "The Sun's Golden Chains", "Mt. Kachikachi", and "Urikohime".

Pardon me, but which way to G----- Village? I heard that this road could take me there...

Uhh ...

We're here to see Mrs. Togamori Shige, who lives just outside the village... Do you know her?

Old Shige ...?

PASSED AWAY ...!?

She passed away this morning.

By the time Little Red Riding Hood arrived, her grandmother was already dead...

G—— Village

There must be some reason For this. Now that we're here, I'd like to pay my respects to her.

Yes, that's right, Officer... So I've taken them to the village For now.

I'd avoid the term "deep in the mountains", but it's certainly not a very accessible village.

We've rarely ever had any guests. We're like a desert island in the middle of land.

I see ...

You speak great Japanese For an English-woman! Hahaha!

The other villagers have all gath-ered For the Funeral.

Tell me her name, and I'll give her a call. That's the house just up there.

Oh, that's right. I have to tell the woman that introduced me to Mrs. Shige that she passed away...

It's an honor ...

This is a university professor from Tokyo, and this is Miss Isabella, an Englishwoman who lives in Fukushima. They came to see Old Shige...

She turned cold in her bed this morning. Perhaps this was just her time.

Does that include the stories of "Urikohime" and "Mt. Kachikachi"?
Is there anyone here who remembers them?

I hear that Mrs. Shige told a lot of folktales in life.
Yes. She told them to her children and grandchildren.

110
G---- Village's Old Stories
G---- Village Branch

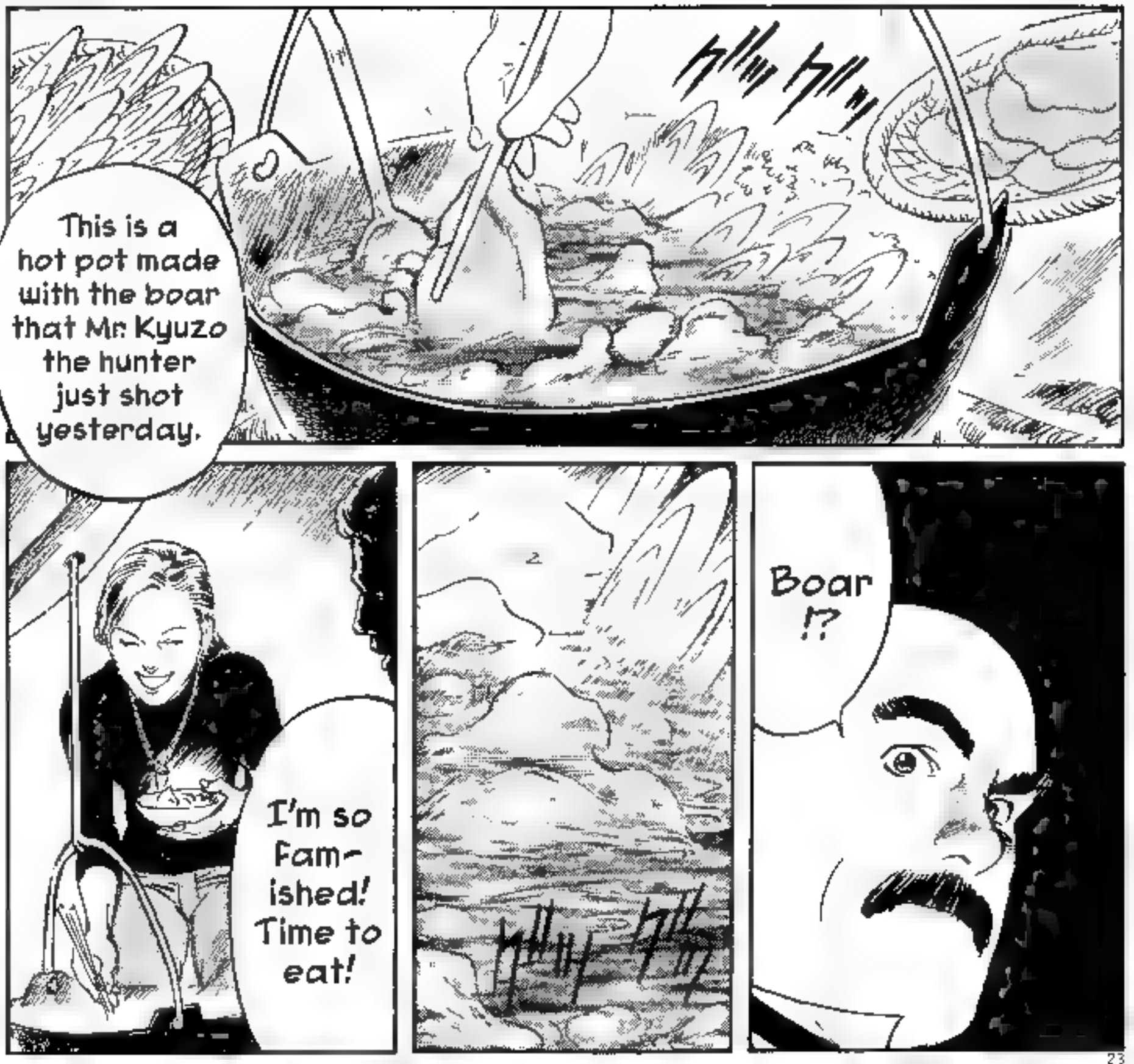
Don't remember 'em. Hahaha ...
Nope ...

Shunta! How rude of you to stand up in front of your elders!

I heard a lot of old stories from Mrs. Shige for a local research project for school last year; and I made a book of them.

"G----- Village's Old Stories"... Hmm...

Professor Munakata, Miss Isabella, why don't you join us for some food?


This is a hot pot made with the boar that Mr. Kyuzo the hunter just shot yesterday.
I'm so fam-ished! Time to eat!
Boar !?

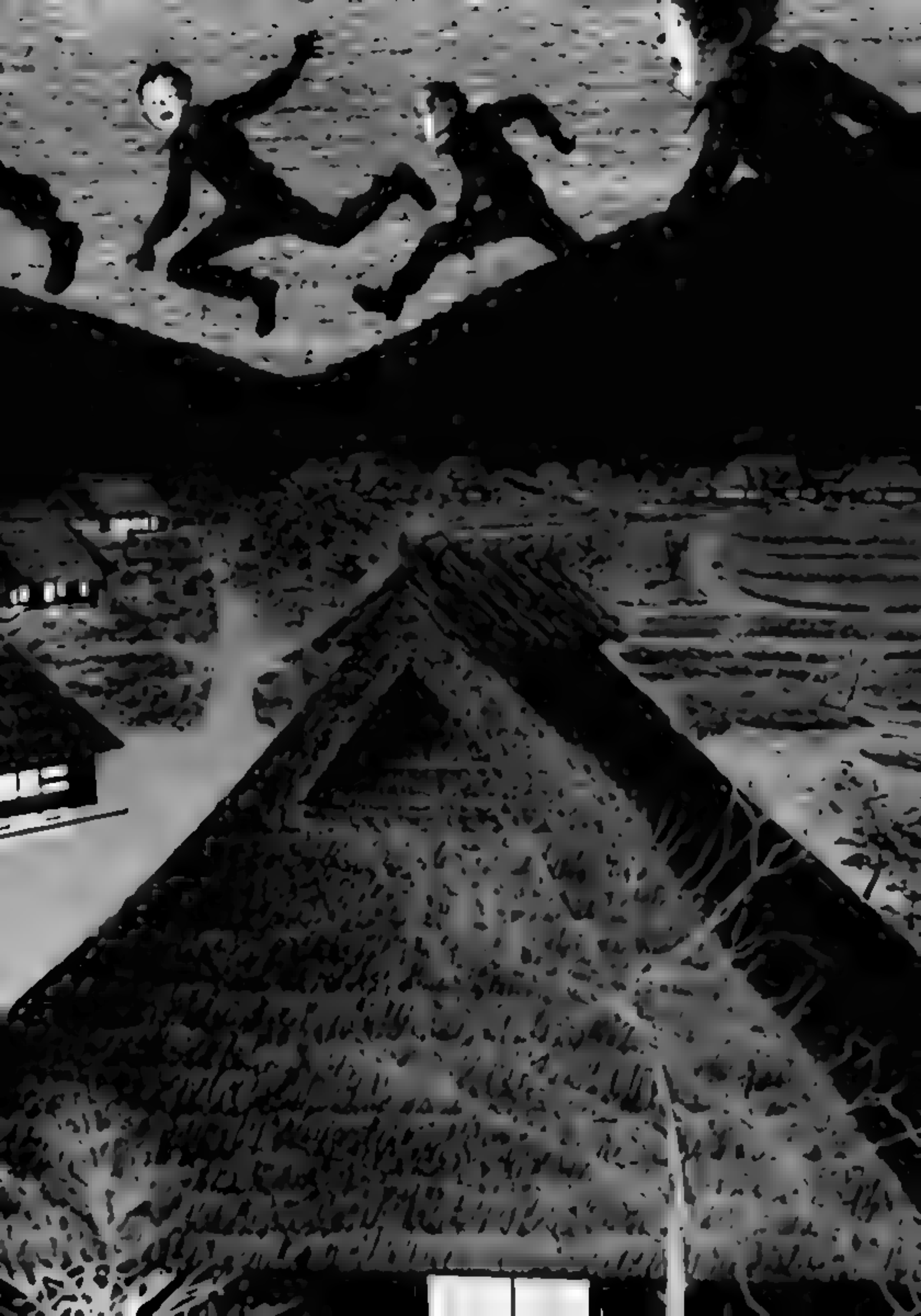
MUNCH MUNCH

And what does this frigid atmosphere remind me of...

Nowhere in Japan do they serve meat after a funeral!!

THEY ATE THE "HAG SOUP"!!

THEY ATE THE "HAG SOUP"!!



Once upon a time, there lived an old man and an old lady. The old man worked in a field in the mountains from morning to night.

But an ill natured tanuki would devour his crops at night, and mock the old man's toils during the day.

The enraged old man captured it with turpentine, to make "tanuki soup" out of it.

But when the old woman was alone, the tanuki deceived her by telling her he would help her pound rice cakes, and had her untie his ropes.

When the old man came home, the "tanuki soup" was ready.

You ate the "hag soup"! You ate the "hag soup"!!

"The Hag Soup" ... Dotto-harau*.

...Do you mind giving me some space, Miss Isabella?

This was originally the first half of the story of "Mt. Kachikachi". In that story, a rabbit defeats the tanuki and avenges them. It's odd that it ends here.

Still, where did the villagers go?

I guess that's how Mrs. Shige told that story here in G----- Village...

*A phrase used to indicate the end of a folk tale (mainly used in the Tohoku region)

I don't know where the temple around here is, and we can't move around much this late at night.

They left to take Mrs. Shige's body to the temple, and left us behind...

ピピピピ

.....

It's the boar soup... It looks like no one's touched it, except me.

There's a story of Little Red Riding Hood that's similar to the "Hag Soup" story...

And the old traditions are particularly strong in the countryside I can't understand why they would serve a meat dish to their guests..

In Buddhist countries, they practice self-purification in times of mourning, and never eat meat.

Little Red Riding Hood

A wolf meets a young girl in the forest, then goes ahead of her to her grandmother's house, devouring her in an instant...

The wolf bit the grandmother to death, then stored her flesh in the cupboard, and her blood in a bottle.

When the girl finally arrived, she said she was hungry, and the wolf disguised as her mother told her, "Eat the meat in the cupboard, and the blood in the bottle."

The girl ate as she was told...

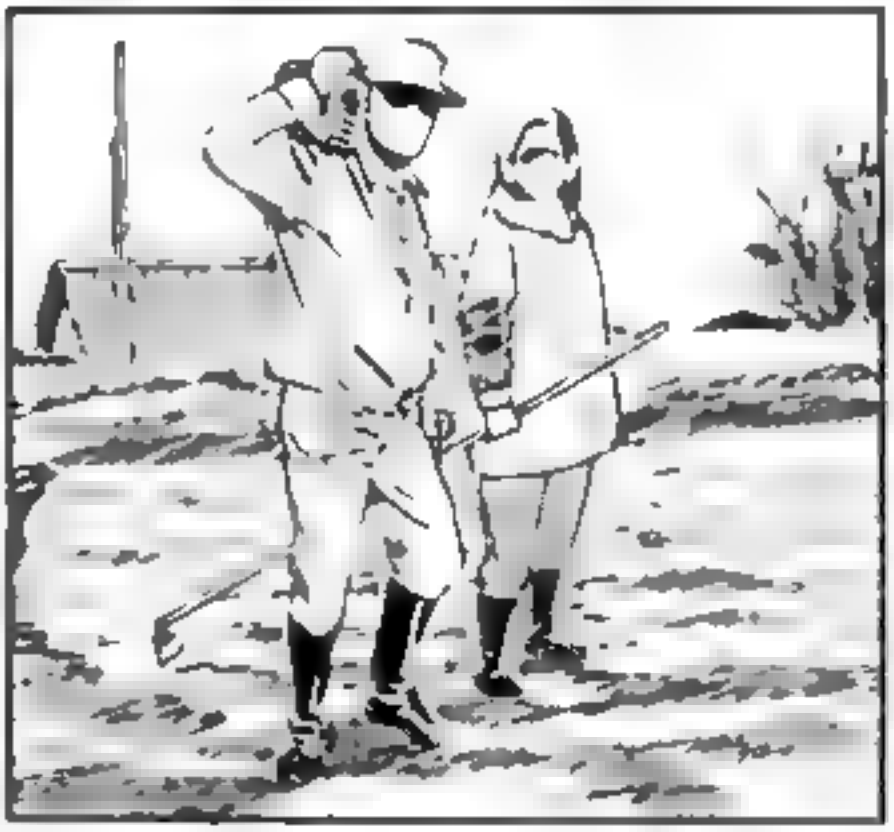
You have eaten your own grandmother's flesh and drank her blood! What a foolish girl you are!

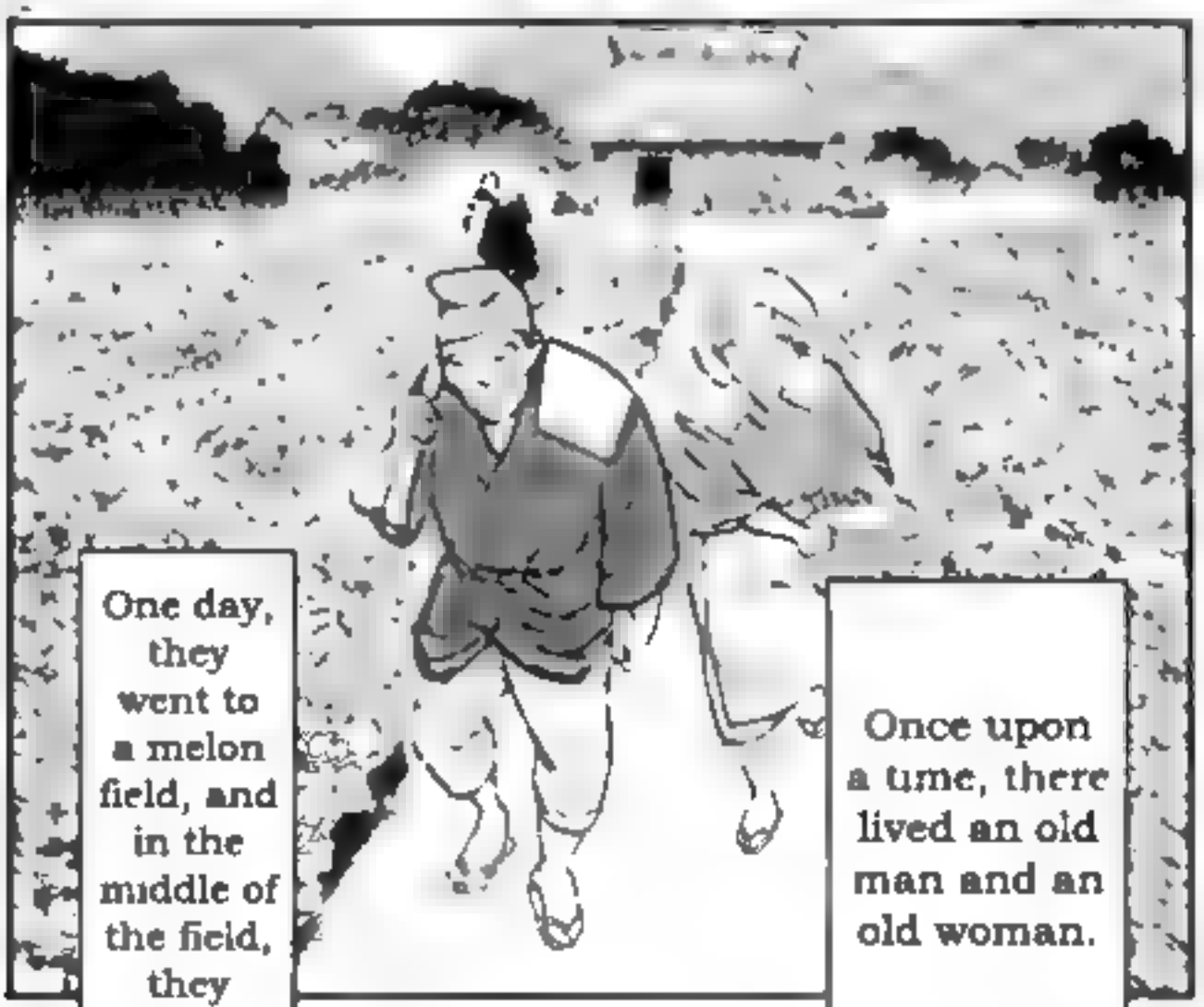
This is probably the oldest version of Little Red Riding Hood...!!

Little Red Riding Hood ate her grandmother...

THEY ATE THE "HAG SOUP" !!

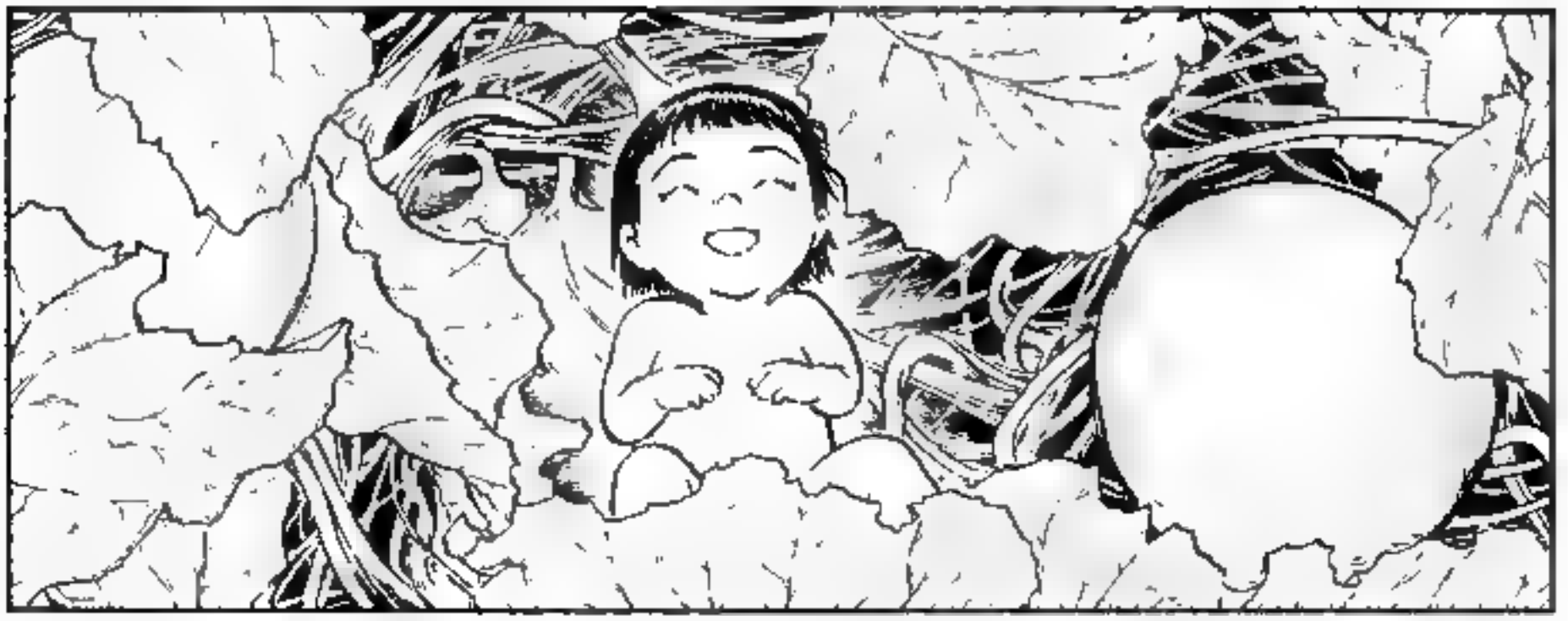
THEY'VE EATEN THE "HAG SOUP" !!





One day, they went to a melon field, and in the middle of the field, they found...

Once upon a time, there lived an old man and an old woman.



The young girl grew up beautifully, and was named "Urikohime"... One day, when she was about to be married, the old man and old woman went out shopping.

While they were away, a wolf came... He persuaded Urikohime to open the door and let him in...

When the old man and old woman came home, Urikohime was making dinner...

Look under the kitchen floor! Look at the bones I put there!

There are different forms of the story of Urikohime in different regions, and in many of them, the deed is done by the "Amanjaku", and Urikohime is not killed.

while the Amanjaku is killed, and its blood spreads over the Fields... And this is why buck-wheat roots are red.

For instance, there are ones where she is tied to a tree and later rescued...

Just like Little Red Riding Hood...

But that may have been the fate of Urikohime long ago.

Do you have any collection of archives from the village, even ones starting in the Edo Period?

The village's history ...?

TOWN HALL

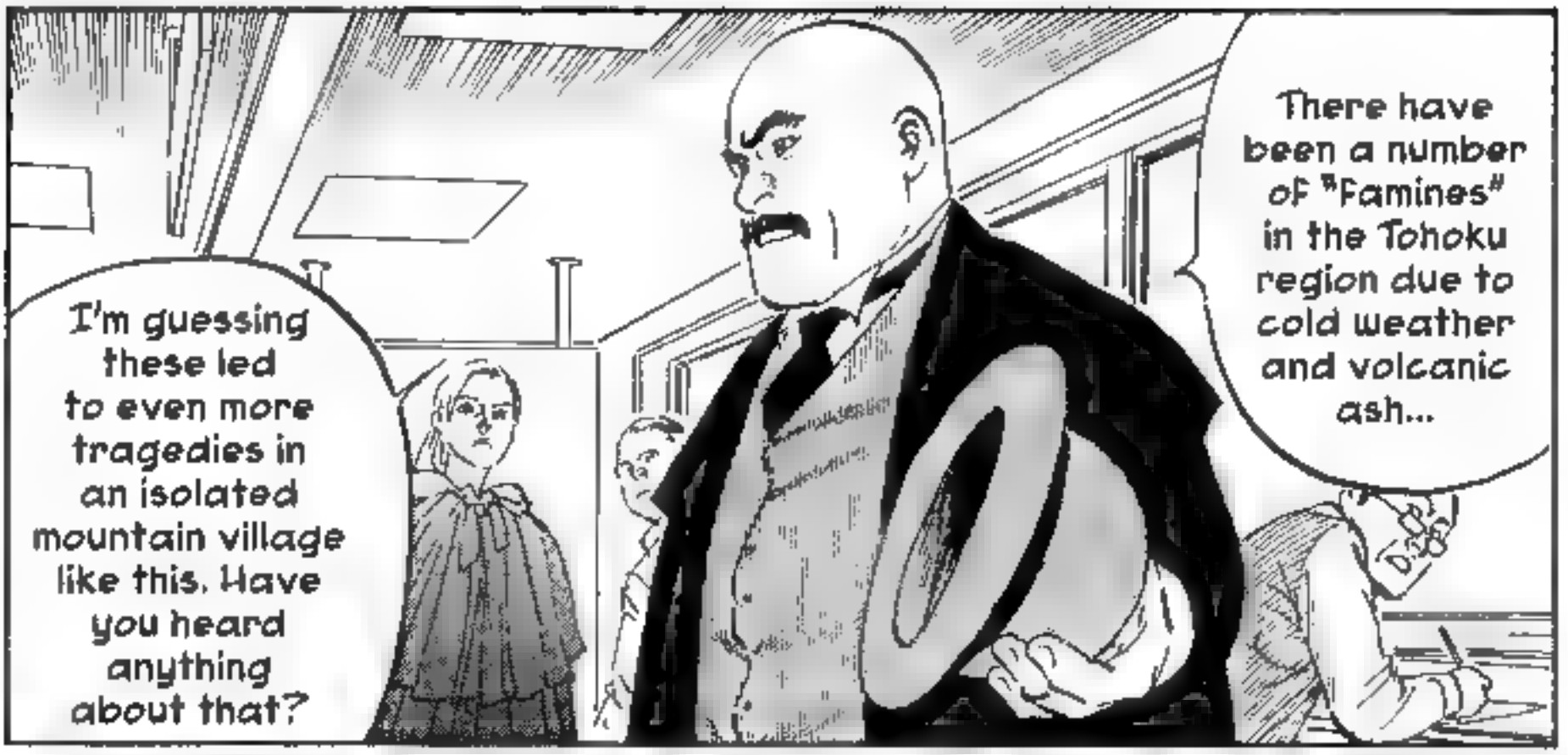
Oh, you're the university professor from Tokyo.

We're going to be merging with the next village over soon, so all our records are being processed. The person in charge of that isn't here right now...

I'm a folklorist named Muna-kata...

Well then, have you heard of a story like this?

.....


I'm guessing these led to even more tragedies in an isolated mountain village like this. Have you heard anything about that?
There have been a number of "famines" in the Tohoku region due to cold weather and volcanic ash...

39

41

40

This is starting to feel grimmer and grimmer

H...
HEY!
STOP
IT!

HOW'D
YOU
LIKE
THE
"HAG
SOUP"?
HAHA-
HAHA!

AHH,
OFFICER!
MAKE
THEM STOP
THROWING
WALNUTS!

Are you still in the village? You should've taken a hint and left!

I guess we'd better leave then, Isabella!

I...I DON'T UNDERSTAND! WHY DID THEIR ATTITUDE CHANGE SO MUCH!?

TAB-OOS !?

I DON'T KNOW, EITHER ...

BUT IT LOOKS LIKE WE'VE VIOLATED ONE OF THE VILLAGE'S TABOOS!

I NOTICED THAT MT. KACHIKACHI, URIKOHIME, AND LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD ARE ALL RELATED TO "CANNIBALISM"!

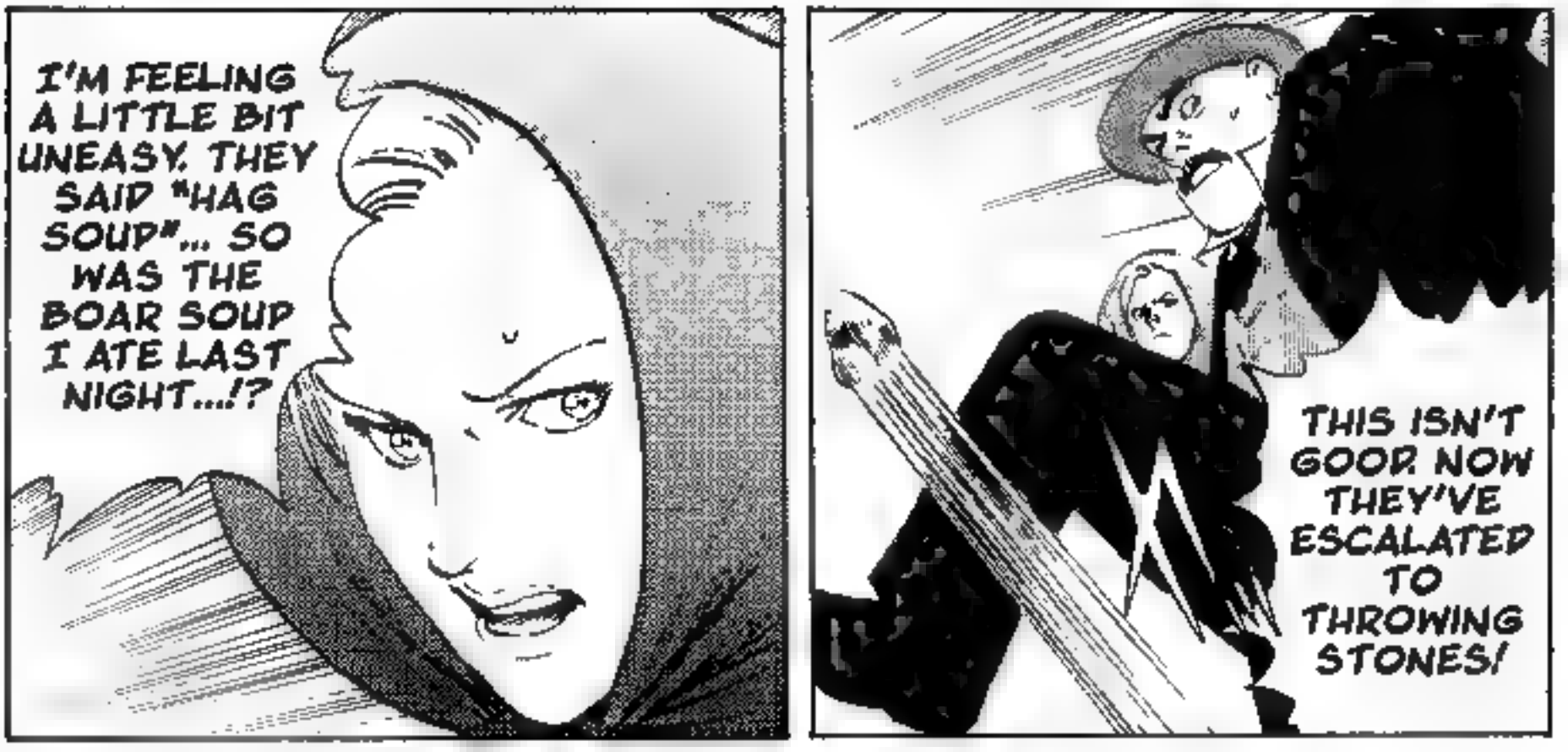
In Europe, there are records of this happening in places like Italy, England, and Germany,

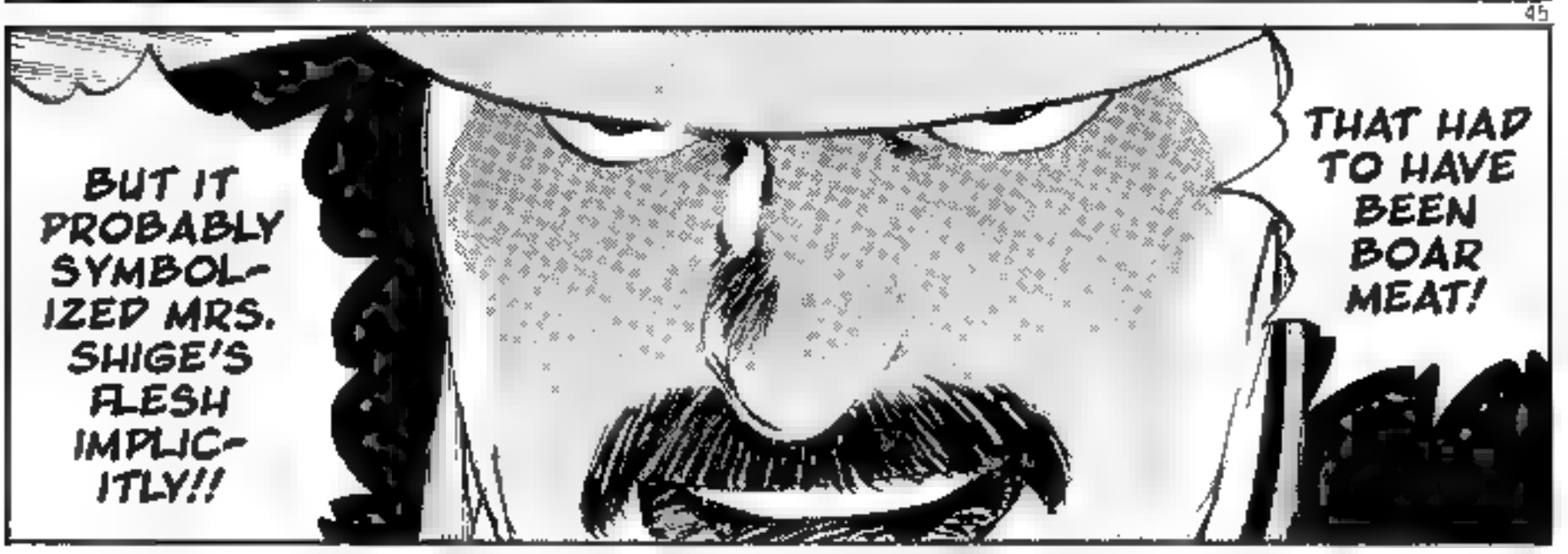
There were a number of times in the past where people would eat human flesh in an intense famine.

And it was passed on sympathetically in regions that experienced the same thing.

The story in which Little Red Riding Hood eats her grandmother may have been told in that kind of setting.

Did they eat human flesh in G----- Village? And are they hiding it from outsiders with a taboo...?


I'M FEELING A LITTLE BIT UNEASY. THEY SAID "HAG SOUP"... SO WAS THE BOAR SOUP I ATE LAST NIGHT...!?
THIS ISN'T GOOD. NOW THEY'VE ESCALATED TO THROWING STONES!


BUT IT PROBABLY SYMBOL-IZED MRS. SHIGE'S FLESH IMPLIC-ITLY!!
THAT HAD TO HAVE BEEN BOAR MEAT!

I ONCE VISITED A VILLAGE IN THE TANBA REGION WHERE THEY PRACTICED CANNIBALISM DURING FAMINES...

THEY WOULD PUT BOAR'S HEADS ON THE VICTIMS-TO-BE, SO THEY WOULD SYMBOLICALLY EAT THEM AS BOARS!

BUT BECAUSE YOU ATE IT OUT OF IGNORANCE, YOU FLIPPED THE SWITCH OF THEIR TABOO SYSTEM!

THIS VILLAGE HAS A CUSTOM OF OFFERING BOAR MEAT THAT SYMBOLIZES THE DEAD TO GUESTS AT FUNERALS. BUT THE GUESTS NATURALLY REFUSE...

In regions of Oceania that practice cannibalism, they call humans "long pork"...

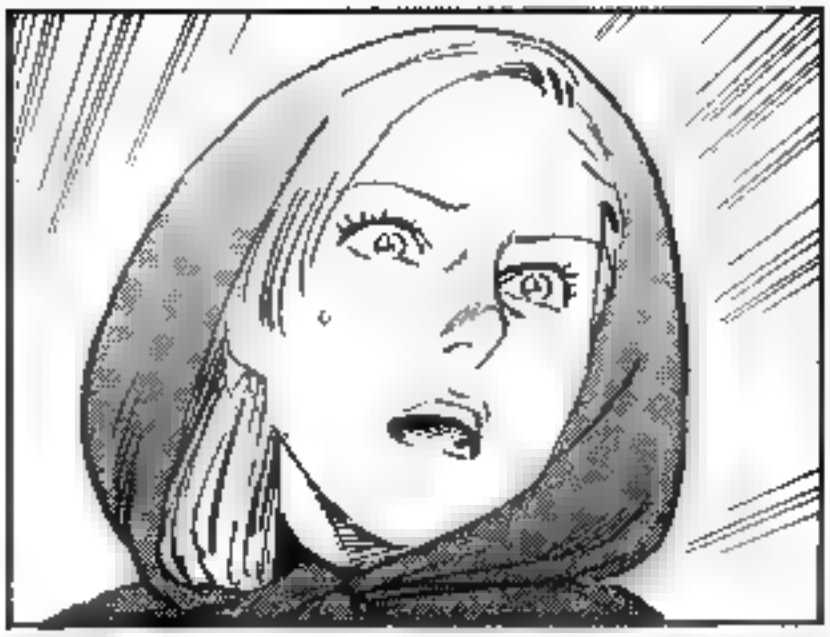
They say that human flesh has a similar taste to wild pig

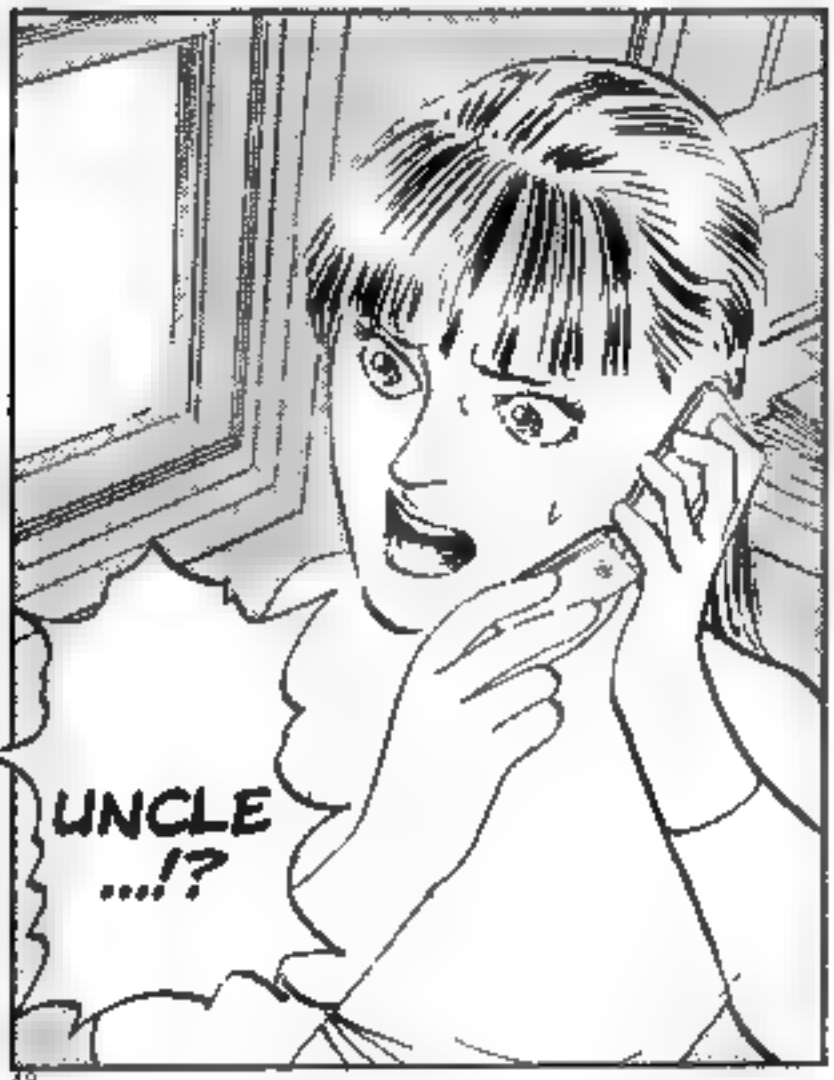
IT'S TAKI! WE DECIDED TO BE PEN-PALS, SO I SENT HER A MESSAGE JUST LAST NIGHT...

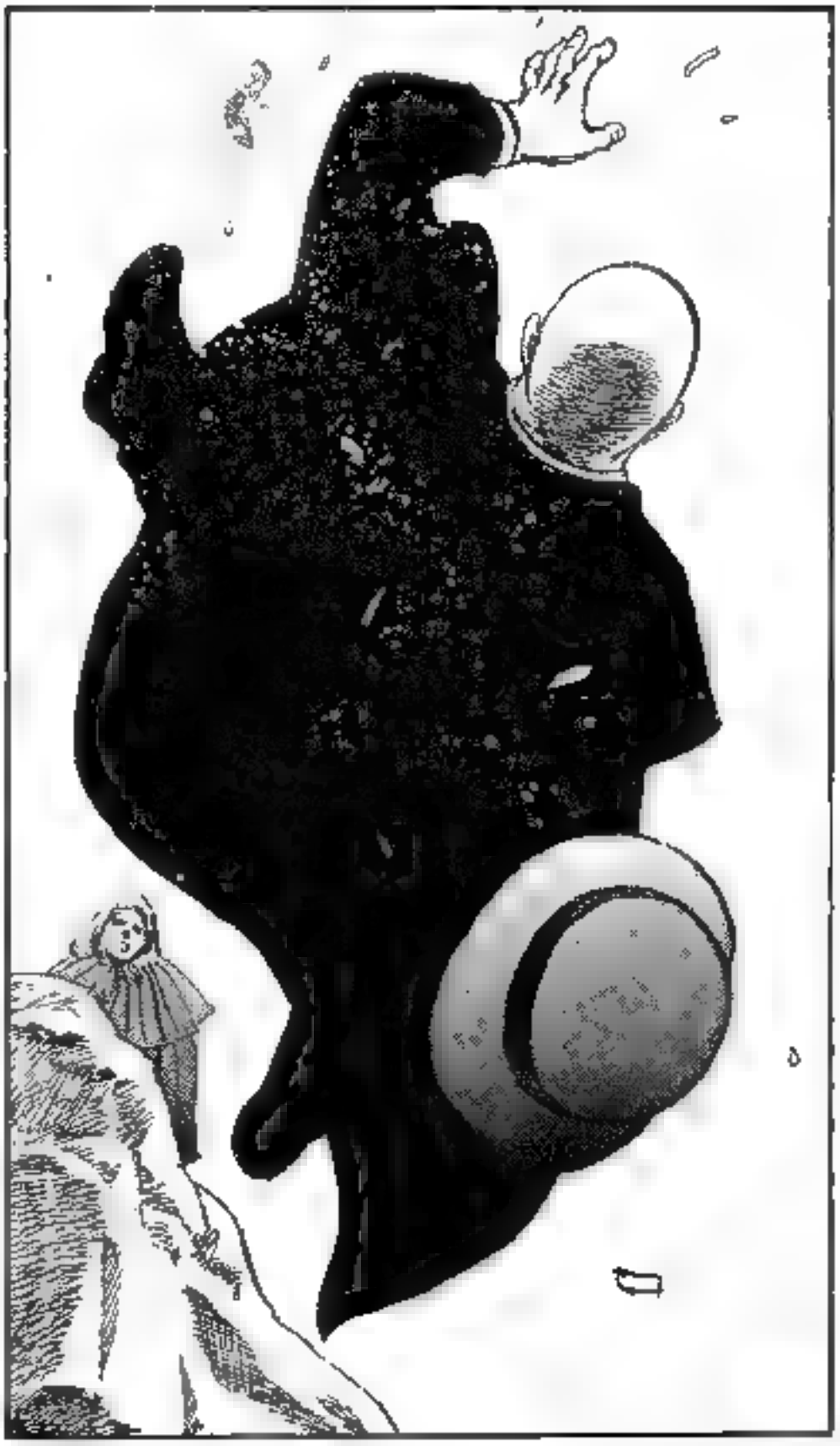
GIVE ME THAT!

WE'VE GOTTEN INTO A LITTLE TROUBLE IN G----- VILLAGE! ...POLICE? NO, EVEN THE OFFICER IS IN ON IT...

IS THAT YOU, TAKI? THE ROAD'S BLOCKED OFF BY AN AVALANCHE! YOU CAN'T GET HERE BY CAR. NO, NO, DON'T COME ALONE. IT'S TOO DANGEROUS!




UNCLE
...!?



Once upon a time, there lived a poor family of four, but one day, when the mother was coming back from working in the village.

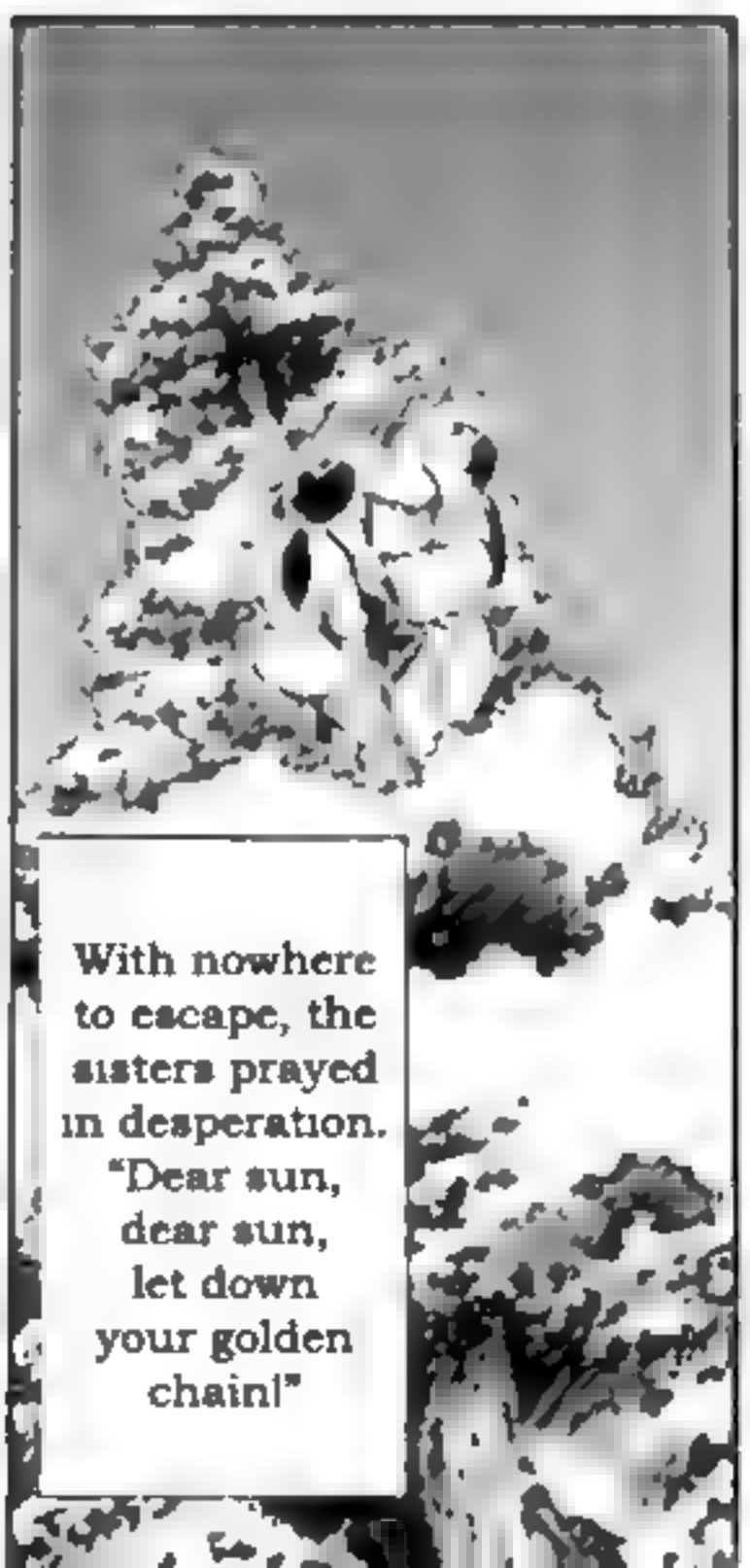
"The Sun's Golden Chain"

The wolf that devoured the mother decided that he wanted to eat the children that remained in the house

When the mother returned, she got into bed with the youngest son, just as usual, but that night, they heard a gnawing sound..

The startled sisters lied, saying they had to relieve themselves, and ran outside...

They hid in a tall tree, but the wolf came after them


With nowhere to escape, the sisters prayed in desperation. "Dear sun, dear sun, let down your golden chain!"

The wolf's blood stained the sorghum red, which it remains to this day...

Dotto-harai.

G—— Village, Iwate Prefecture

The sisters rose to heaven where they became stars... But the wolf had grabbed hold of a frayed rope, and fell on a stump of "sorghum"*.

*A grain in the grass family.

This professor's pretty lucky. He fell off a cliff and came out with nothing but scratches.

It'd be a serious matter if he called anyone, so I was aiming for the phone ...

Yeah, he'd have deserved it!

If he died, he'd have deserved it.

Not only did he break the custom of the "Hag Soup", he even tried to look into the village's history.

The "customs" must be kept.

It may have been centuries ago, but there was a time when the people of this village became like savages.
They were left starving from the famine...

while parents ate children, one by one.

Children ate parents and grandparents...
So they ate human corpses, and even killed the living so they could eat.

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This mother that barely even appears in this story may have eaten her child like a wolf
The deeds done by wolves and demons in the old stories may have been the work of the "parents".

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I...I HAVE TO GO! LET ME USE THE TOILET!!

Even if the same thing happened somewhere else, we can't let them know.

Whatever the circumstances, the village will be shamed if outsiders know of this repulsive event.

Alright, then take the professor to Kyuzo's house, too, and tie him up. We'll have a village meeting to decide their sentence.

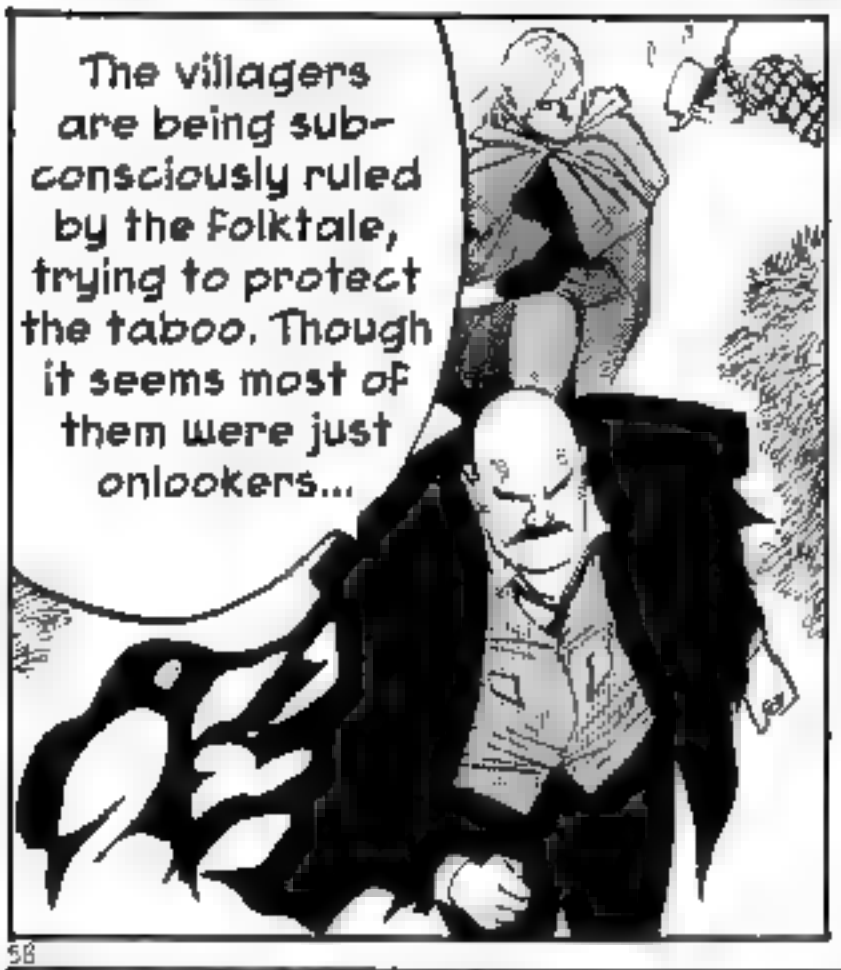
Fine, Fine. My house is nearby, so I'll take you to the toilet there.

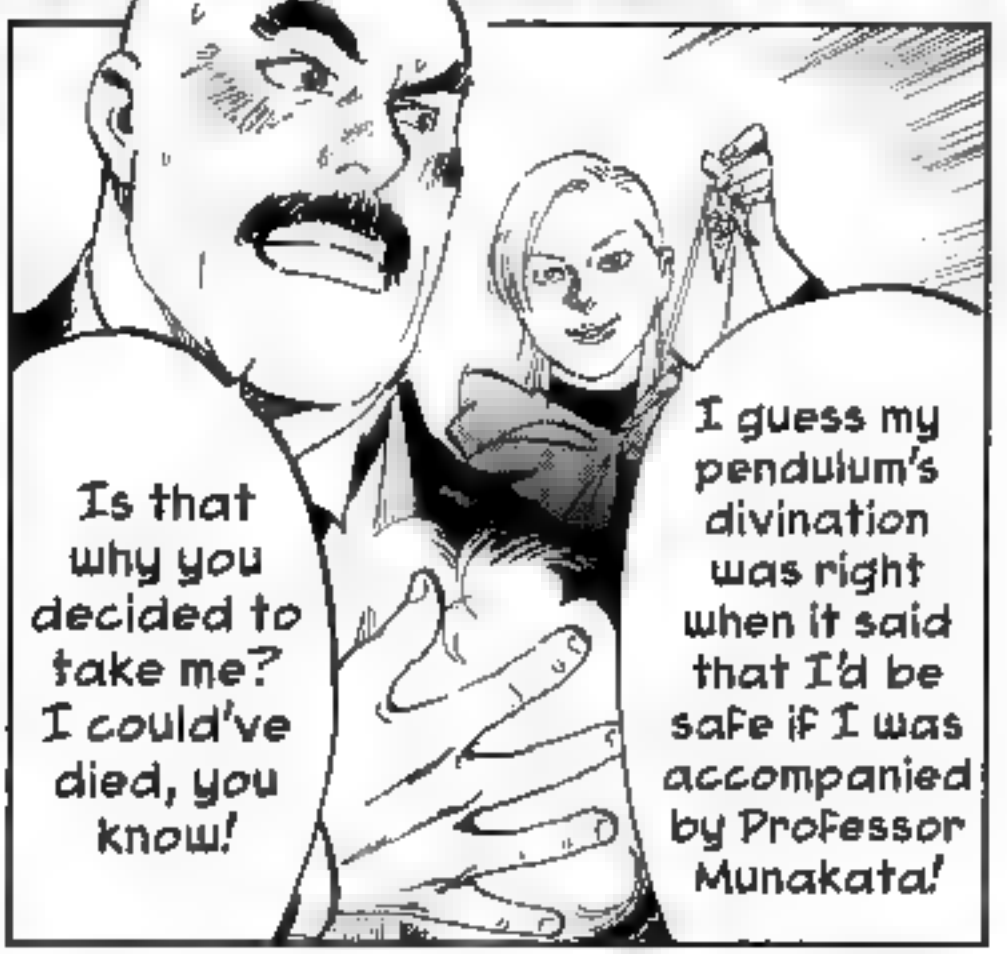
I HAVE TO GO!!

UNTIE ME, NOW!

.....

YEO WCH!


The villagers are being sub-consciously ruled by the folktale, trying to protect the taboo. Though it seems most of them were just onlookers...


Is that why you decided to take me? I could've died, you know!
I guess my pendulum's divination was right when it said that I'd be safe if I was accompanied by Professor Munakata!

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So, basically we've become Little Red Riding Hood and the old man. We've violated the taboo!

BUT WEREN'T THE WOLF AND THE TANUKI THE VIL-LAINS?
NO, THEY'RE THE IN-DICTERS! THAT'S WHY THEY ESCAPE UNHARMED!
That's why Little Red Riding Hood was killed, and the old man and old woman met a gruesome end!
Those who ate their relatives or loved ones, no matter how desperate they were, are indicted as violators of the taboo!
THAT WAY!!
THERE THEY ARE!

THERE'S A VERSION OF "LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD" WHERE SHE SUCCEEDS IN ESCAPING AFTER EATING HER GRAND-MOTHER'S FLESH!

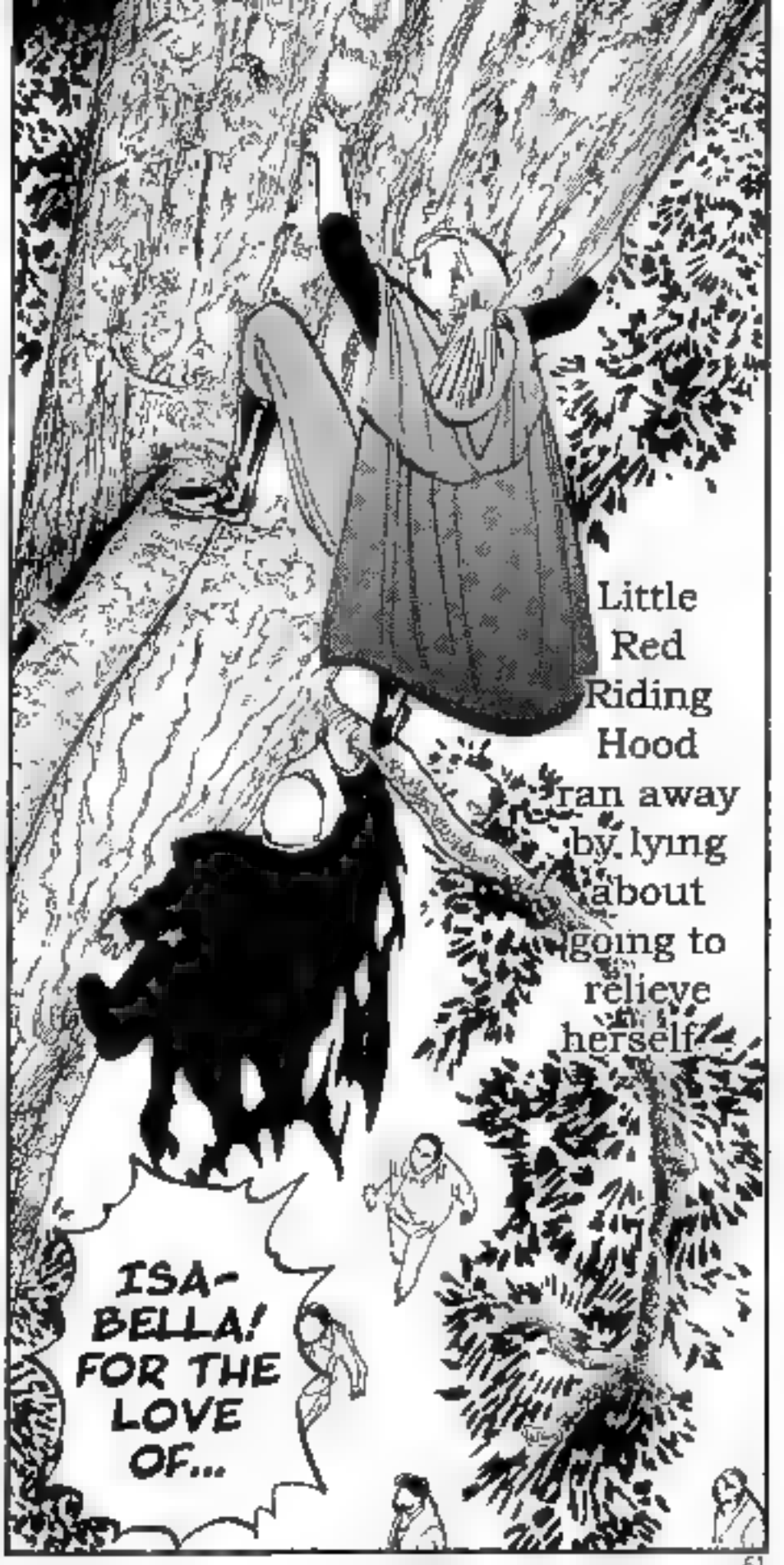
WHAT GOOD IS CLIMB-ING A TREE GOING TO DO!?

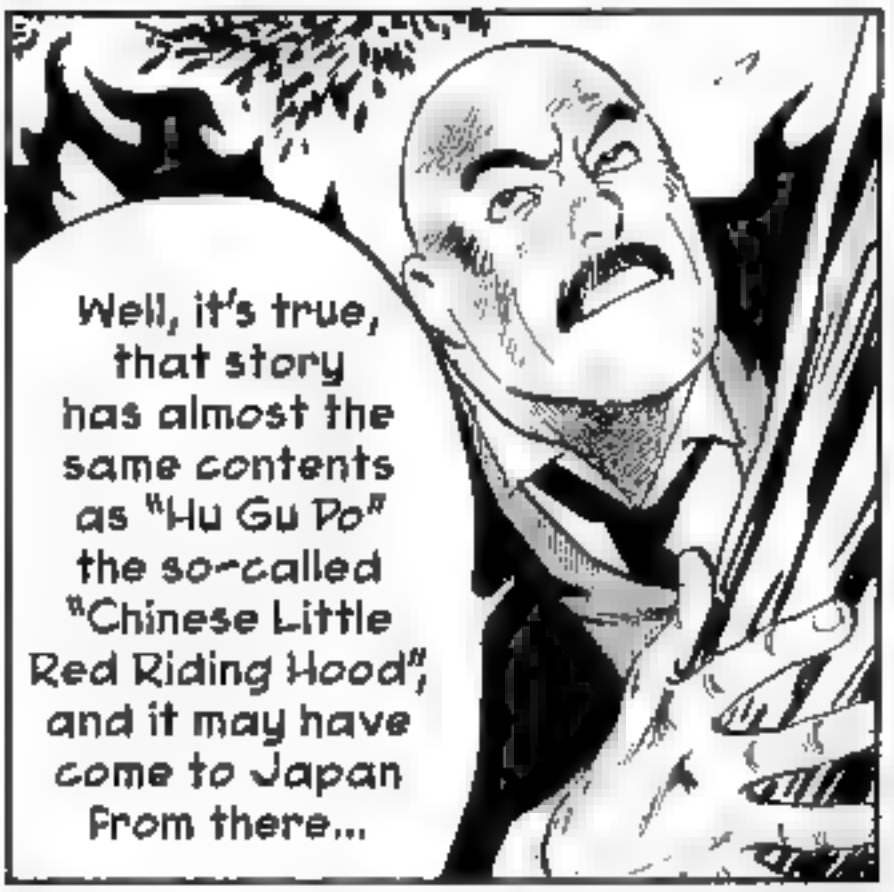
When Little Red Riding Hood noticed the wolf's identity, she lied and said she was going to relieve herself, and ran outside ..

She shook off the wolf and made it back home, just in the nick of time!

THE END

And the sisters in "The Sun's Golden Chain" escape the same way, climb a tree, and are saved!


Little Red Riding Hood ran away by lying about going to relieve herself
ISA-BELLA! FOR THE LOVE OF...


Well, it's true, that story has almost the same contents as "Hu Gu Po" the so-called "Chinese Little Red Riding Hood", and it may have come to Japan From there...

They're all here now... That reminds me...
There's a Folktale called "Murila" From a cannibal tribe on the South Pacific island of Bougain-ville...

They gave a portion of her body to her relative.

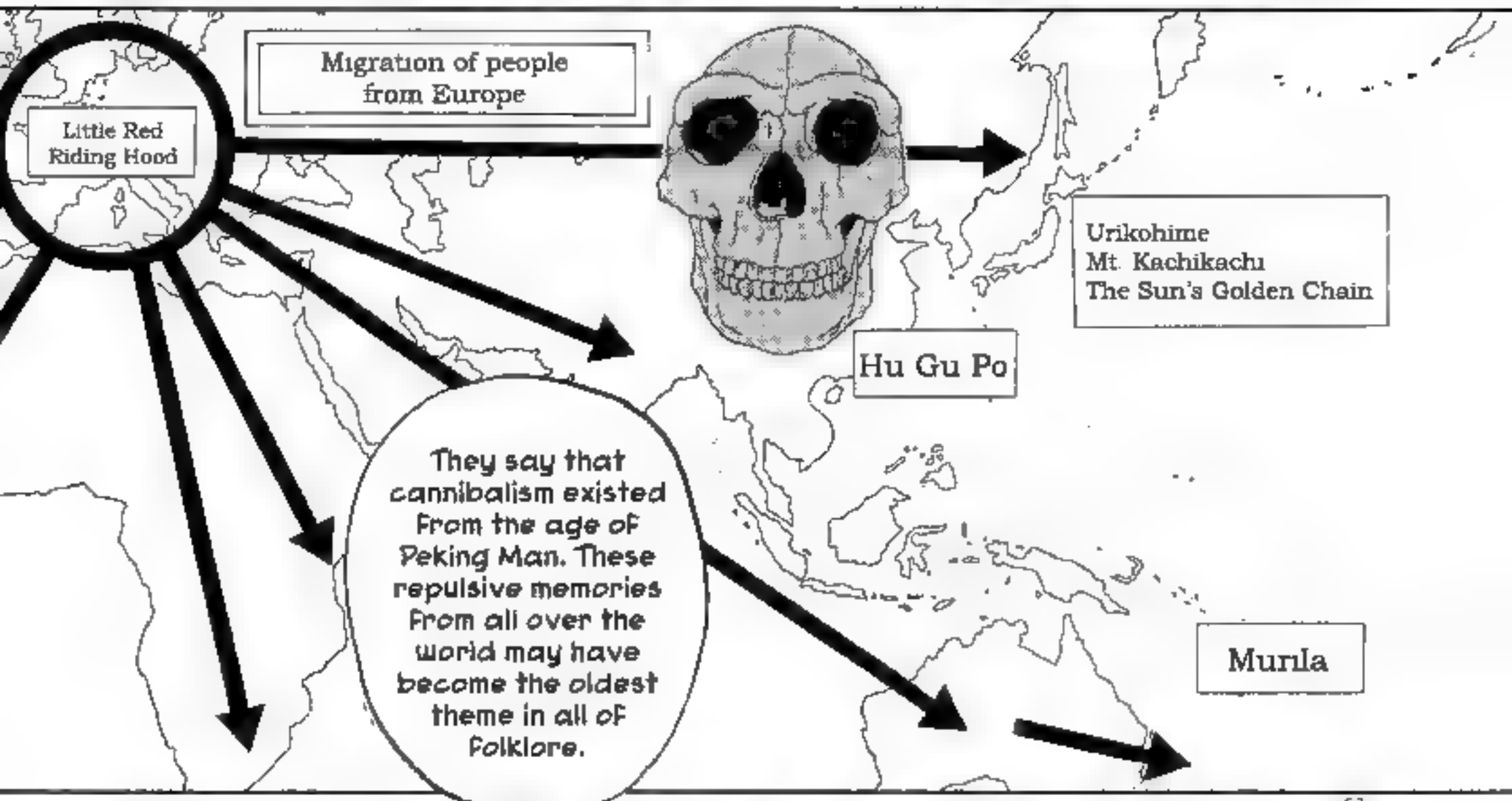
That man ate it without knowing a thing!

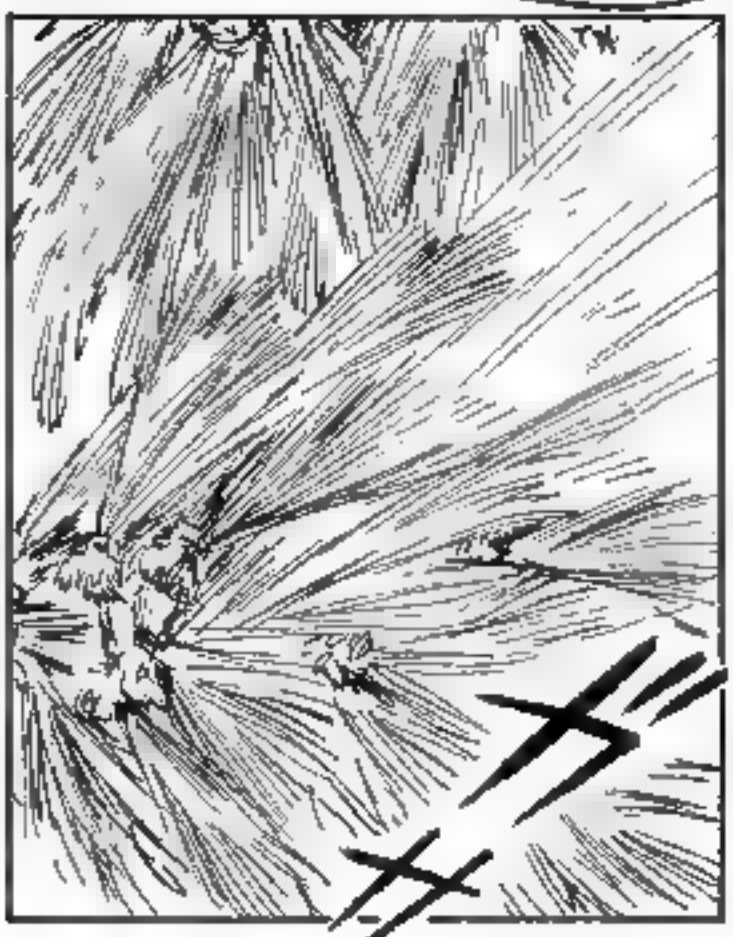
The brats of the island threw nuts at a passing old woman, forced her to eat them, and killed her

The enraged man pursued the boys, but they climbed a high tree and escaped to Heaven...

You ate your grandmother's flesh! You ate your own grandmother's flesh!

Even cannibal tribes had a taboo against eating those close to them...


Migration of people from Europe
Little Red Riding Hood
Urikohime
Mt. Kachikachu
The Sun's Golden Chain
Hu Gu Po
Murila
They say that cannibalism existed from the age of Peking Man. These repulsive memories from all over the world may have become the oldest theme in all of folklore.



!

K... Keep climbing! We have to get higher...!!

Hehehe... There's no escape for them. What fools.

They'll come down if we smoke them out.

COUGH

W...Why don't you take people's advice for once!? Now if they fire at us, we're done for!

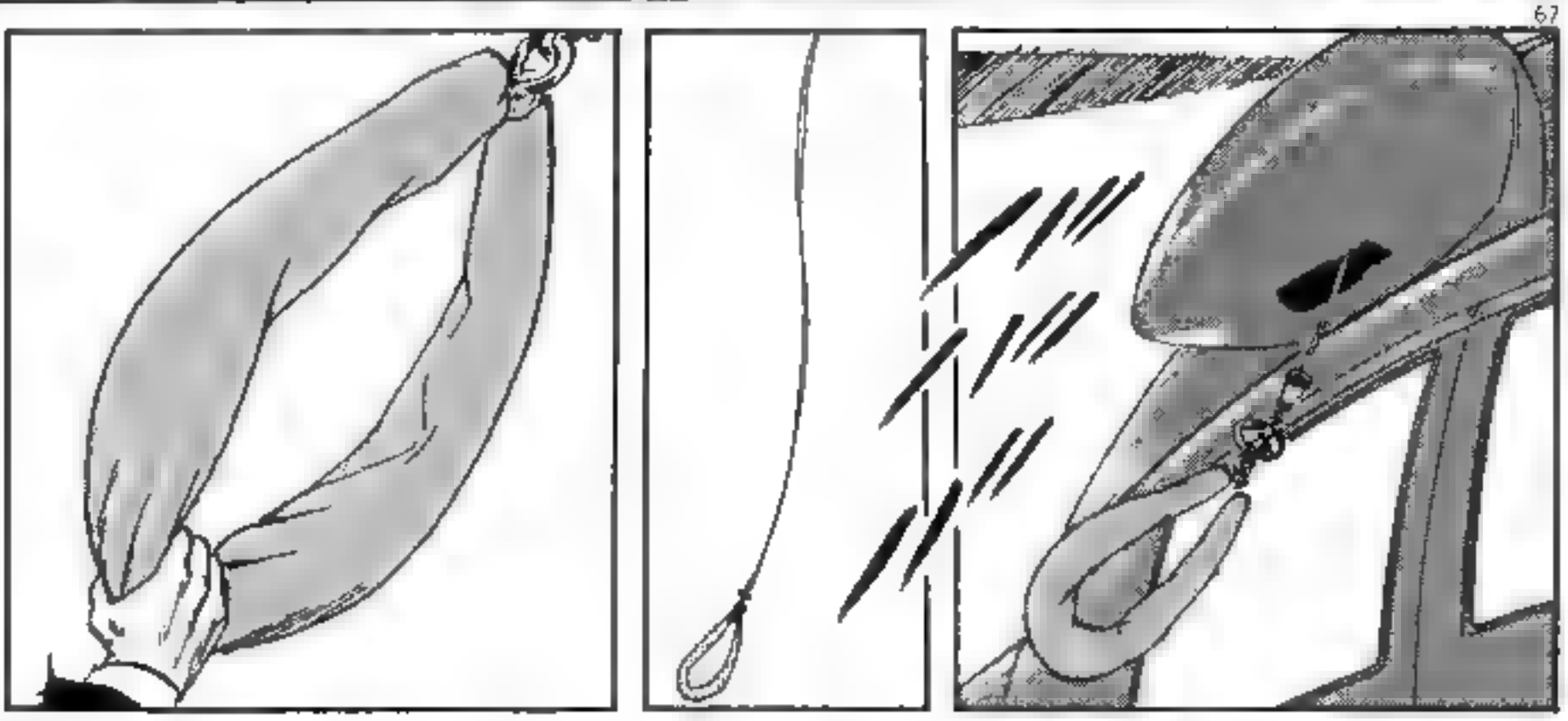
COUGH COUGH

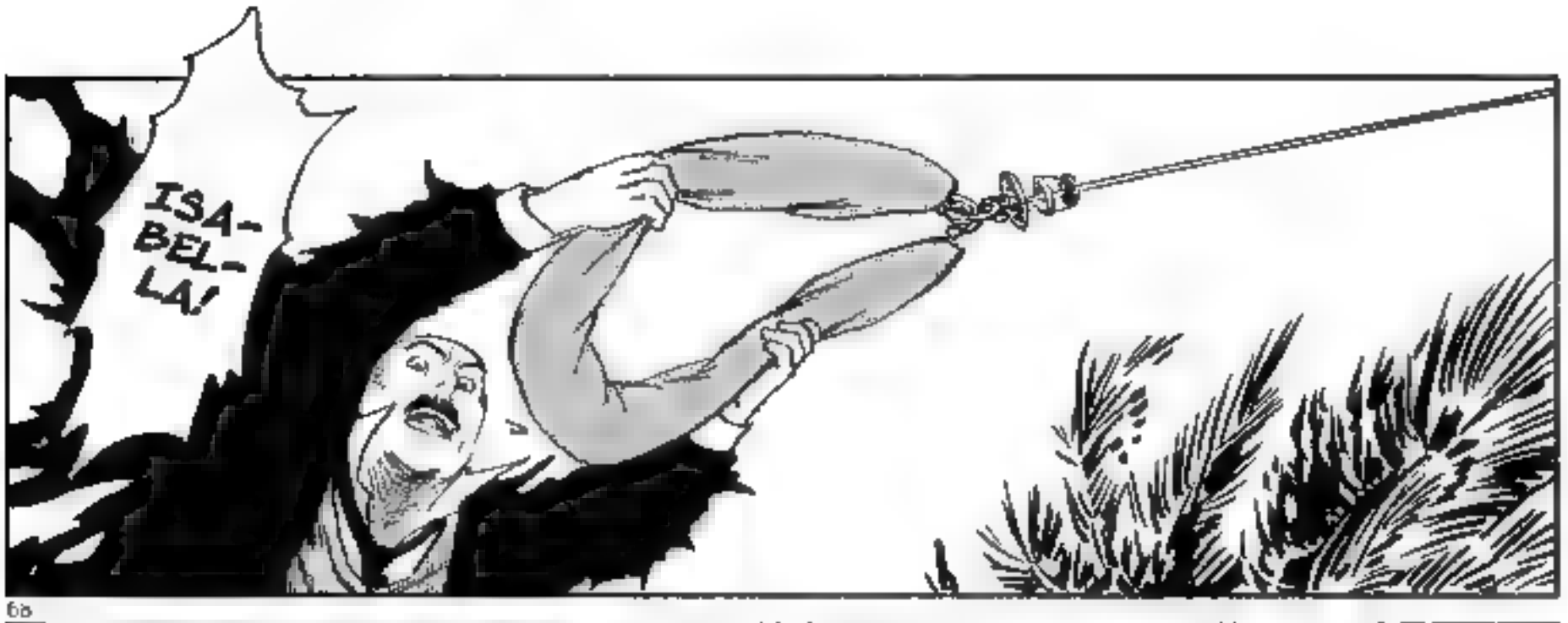
My grandmother back home told me never to do anything stupid enough to get me tied to a tree and burned...

HEY! OVER HERE!

UN-
CLE!

TAKI
!?





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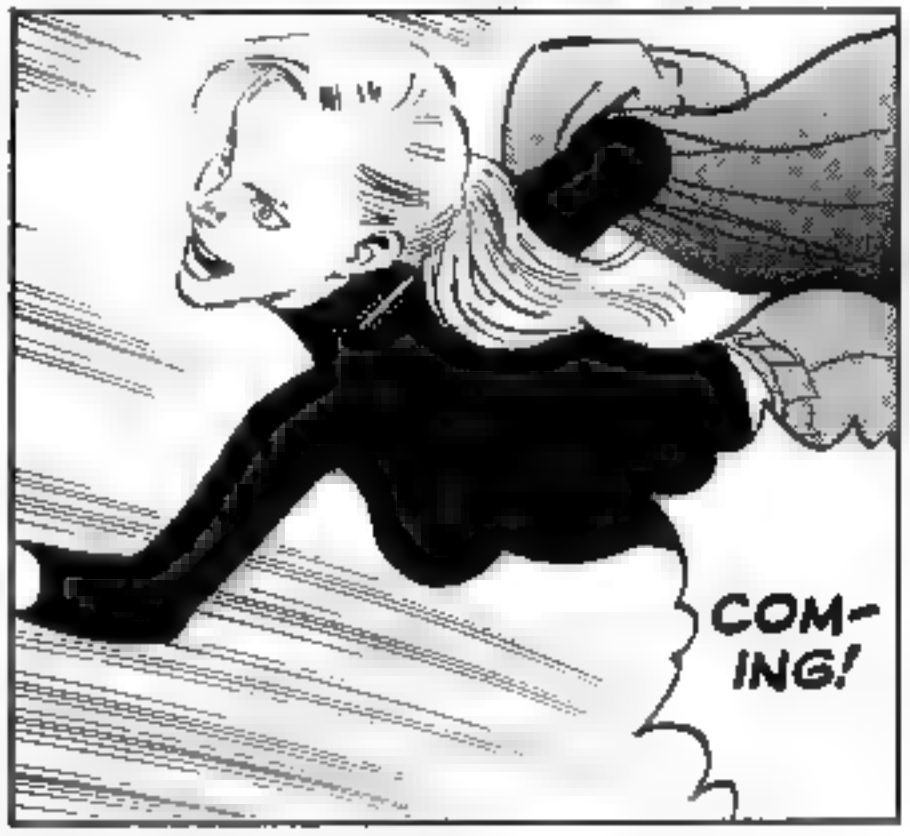


KCH
...

69

I guess that's *dotto-harai*...

Dotto-harai...

That's the sun's golden chain...

Dotto-
harai...

Ow.

ISABELLA KEPT SENDING ME THIS EMOJI OVER AND OVER LAST NIGHT... I THOUGHT SOMETHING MIGHT BE WRONG, SO I CALLED THIS MORNING!

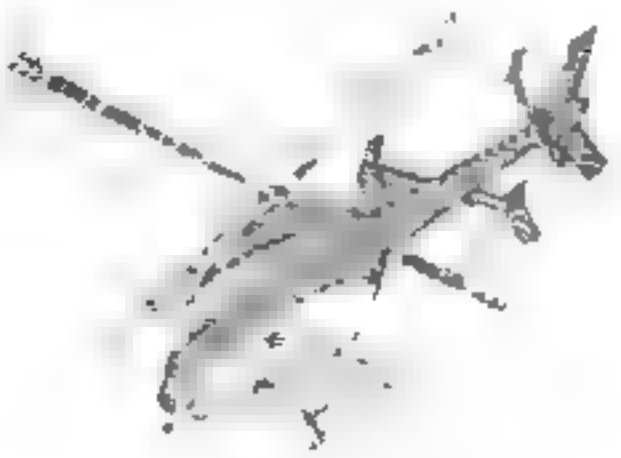
LAST NIGHT !? BUT...

I KNOW THE ROAD WAS BLOCK-ED OFF, BUT WHY DID YOU ORDER A HELICOPTER ...?

We very nearly shared the fate of Little Red Riding Hood because we happened to set off the taboo system.

It is the many onlookers that support this.

The taboo system does not only exist in villages deep within the mountains...



Everyone has things they would rather keep hidden... And when they are infringed upon, warning signs start to appear, until you are swallowed up by a massive trap...

THE OAKE RECORDS OF PROFESSOR MIYAMA

CHAPTER 20

PRESENTED BY

HOKUTO NO GUN

TRANSLATED BY

SYSTEMATICCHAOS

EDITING BY

HIGHTIDE AND KAZUHIKO

PROOFREADING BY

DESTORYERRING

CHAPTER 21: THE IRON SAND HAKKENDEN

Tokyo
East Asia University of Culture

How-ever...

...At any rate, as we enter a new year, we are hoping for our faculty of professors to provide further high-quality education.

The fact remains that the university's finances are only getting tighter, and talks of mergers with another university or conglomeration are looking more and more likely.

Mergers...? Is this university having talks about that?

.....

No, no. It's just that the university will have to reorganize with the declining birthrate.
I just want our faculty to presuppose these conditions ...

Yes, I've heard that it's integrating with existing schools to expand its conglomerate in West Japan.

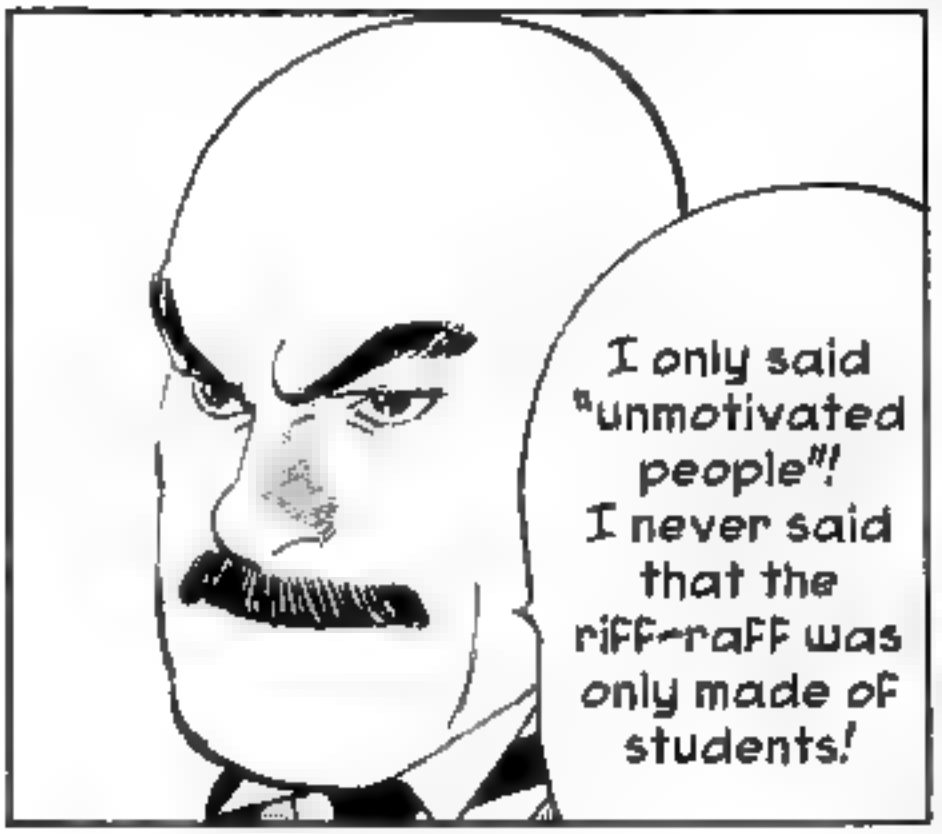
That reminds me, I've heard that the Kyushu-based mammoth university "Ogakuen" is looking to expand into Kanto.

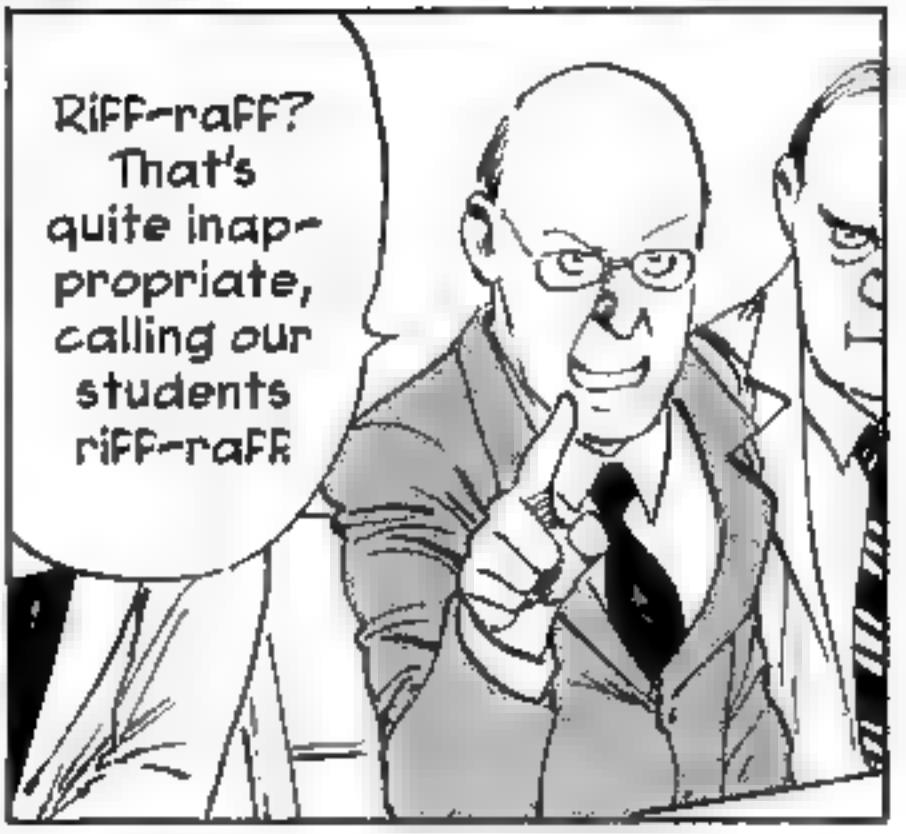
It's obviously better to merge or integrate, rather than be selected by the exams...

But that may be for the best. With fewer applicants, unpopular universities will find themselves under-enrolled, and eventually bankrupt.

I'm opposed to a merger!

There's enough unmotivated people loitering around here as it is! What point is there in gathering any more riff-raff?
A university is strictly a place for people that want to deepen their know-ledge.


I only said "unmotivated people"! I never said that the riff-raff was only made of students!


Riff-raff? That's quite inap-propriate, calling our students riff-raff

Wha ...?

What is it, President?

There's something I need to ask you...

Professor Munakata!

This assistant professor happens to be my underclassman. Why don't you do me a favor and go meet with her?

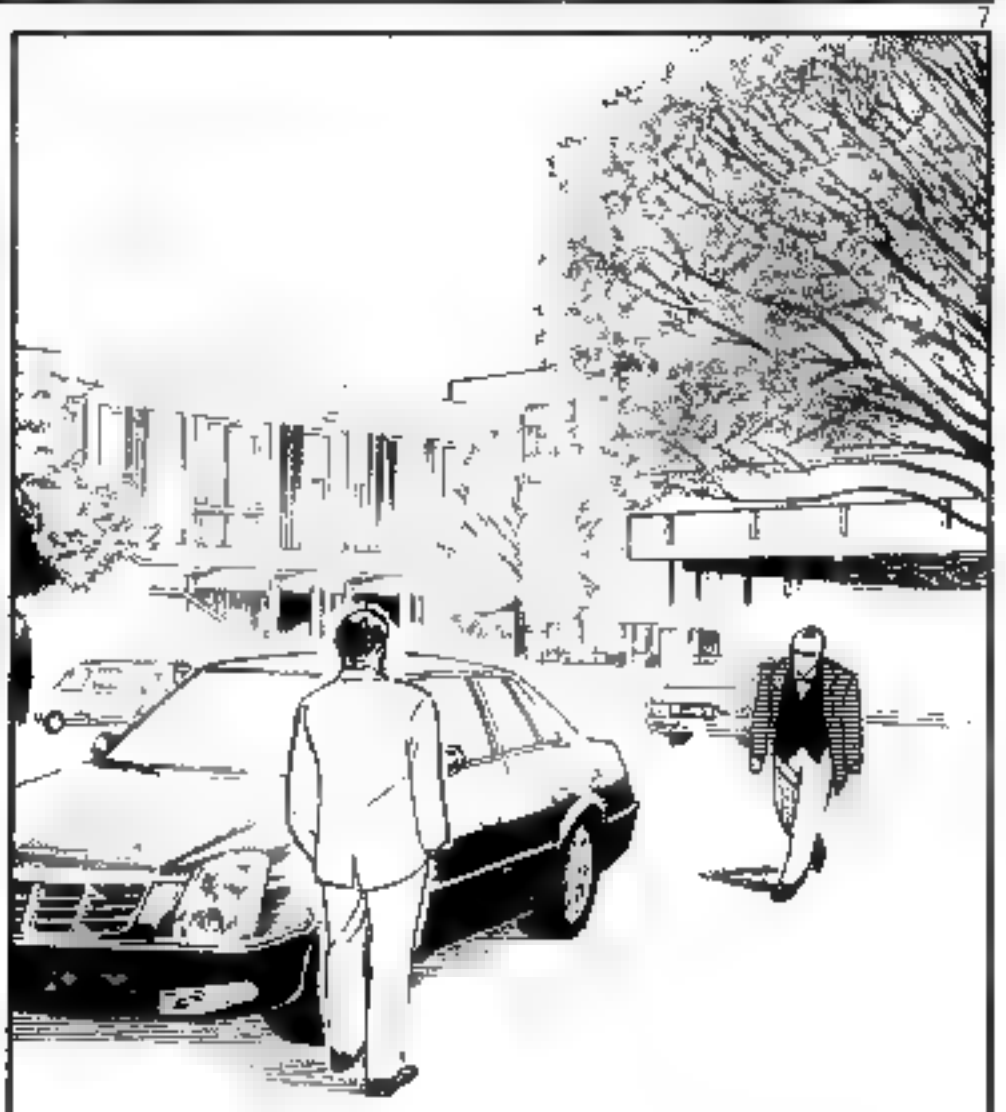
Satomi University in Chiba Prefecture happens to be our sister school, and there's an assistant professor there by the name of Tamatsu who wants to speak to you.

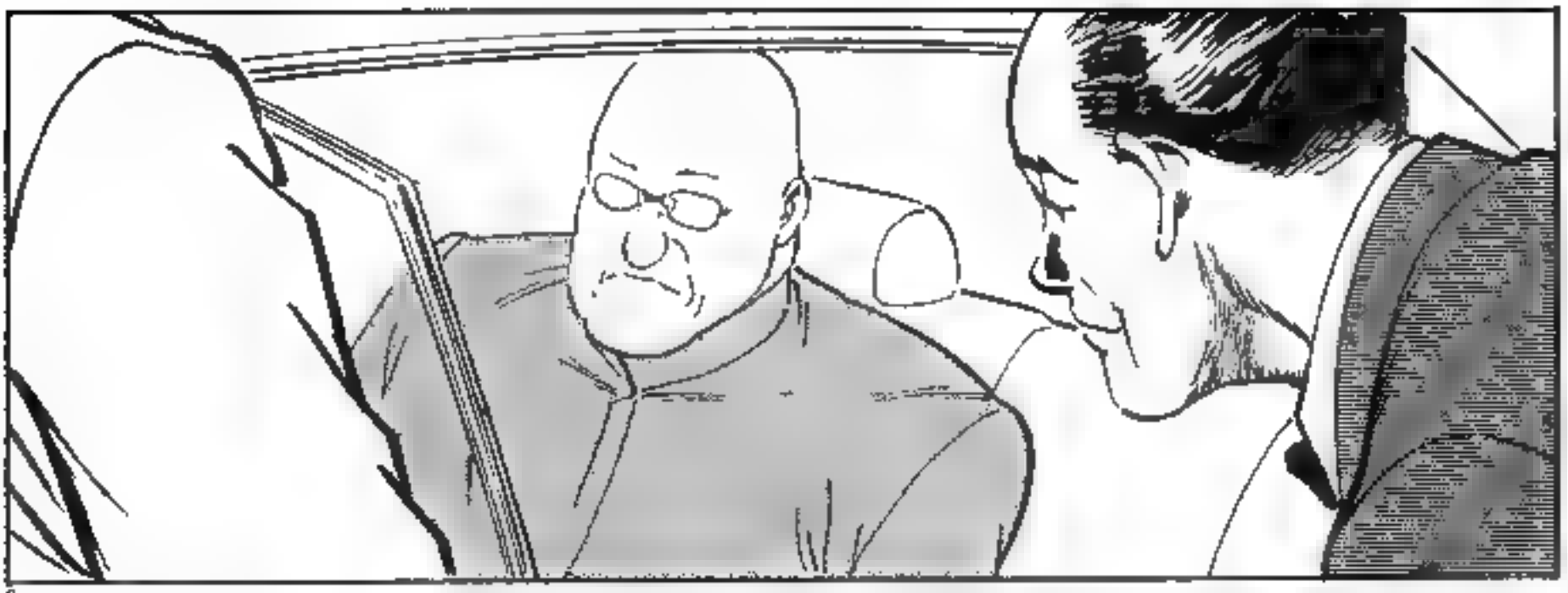
Iron... Well, I can't think of a reason to say no...

I think it has to do with your specialization, the folk history of "iron"...

.....

Good.
Then I'll
call her
up right
away.





Chiba Prefecture
Cape Inubo

Satomi University

Does this university have a folkloristics department?

No. I'd like to start one, but I'm giving lectures on Japanese history at the moment...

I'm Tamatsu. It's an honor to have you here.

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They're right here.

And there are eight freshmen in my class that I'd like you to meet today...

Let's start with Inuki...

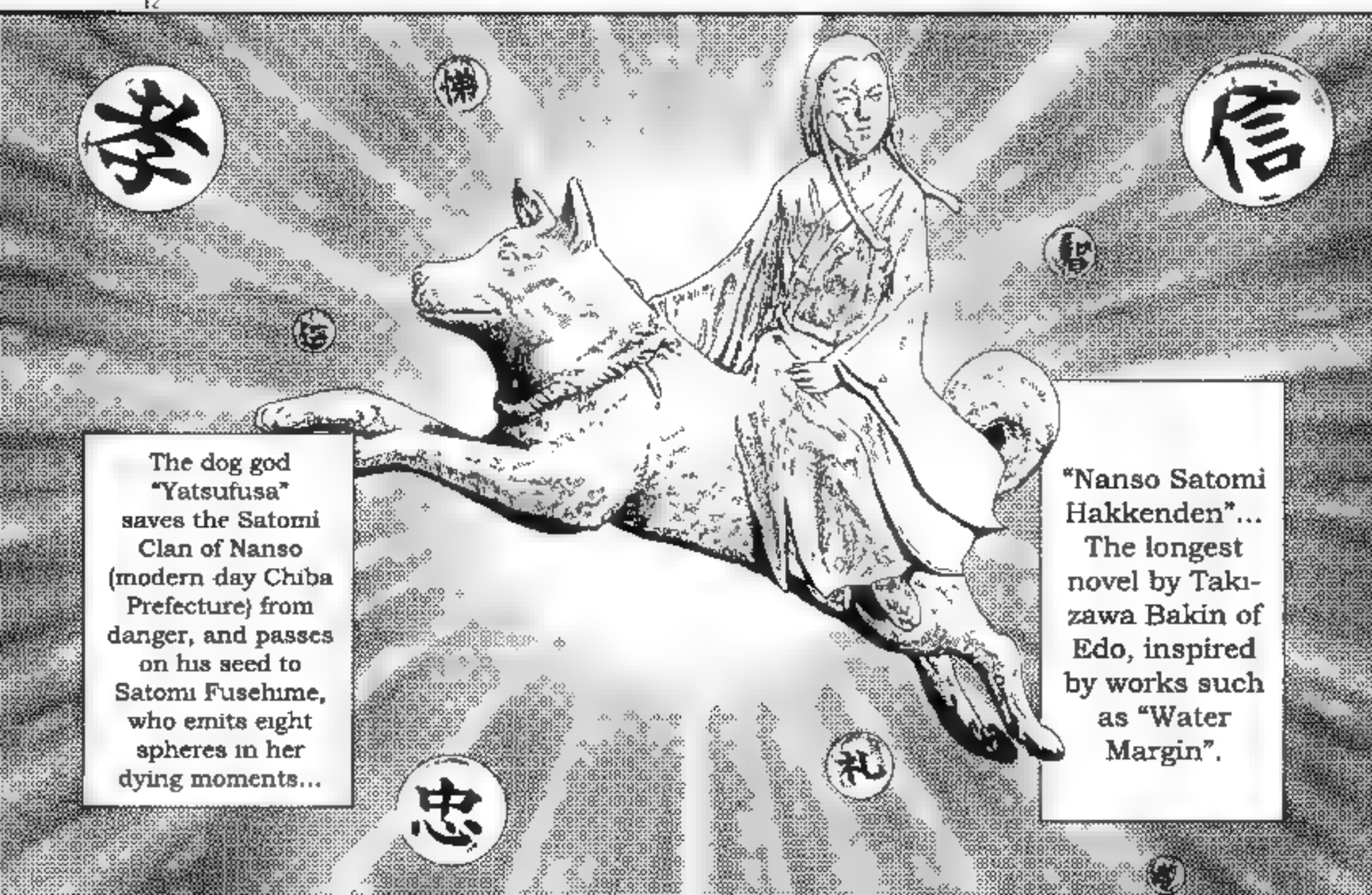
Al-right.

Now, I'd like you all to tell Professor Munakata your names and where you're from.

Inumaru Satoru... I'm From Fukuoka.
Inuyama Jinpachi... I'm from Shimane.
Inukai Mutsuki... I'm From Okayama Prefec-ture.
Inuki Shun... I'm from Hyogo Prefec-ture.
Inue Kou... I'm From Kago-shima.
Inugami Bingo... Nagano Prefec-ture.
Inuzuka Shino... I'm a Chiba native.
Inumura Rei... Miyagi!

All eight of you have "Inu" in your surnames ...!?

Just like the "Satomi Hakkenden"! Right?


孝
悌
忠
信
礼
The dog god "Yatsufusa" saves the Satomi Clan of Nanso (modern day Chiba Prefecture) from danger, and passes on his seed to Satomi Fusehime, who emits eight spheres in her dying moments...
"Nanso Satomi Hakkenden"... The longest novel by Takizawa Bakin of Edo, inspired by works such as "Water Margin".

Inuta Kobu-ngo

Inu-saka Keno

Inu-mura Dai-kaku

Eight children are born from the regions that these spheres land in, each of them with a surname containing "Inu", or "Dog"

Inu-yama Dose-tsu

Drawn together by destiny, these "eight dog warriors" are drawn by the Satomi Clan into the greatest battle in Kanto .. and lead them to victory.

Inue Shin-bei

Inu-kawa So-suke

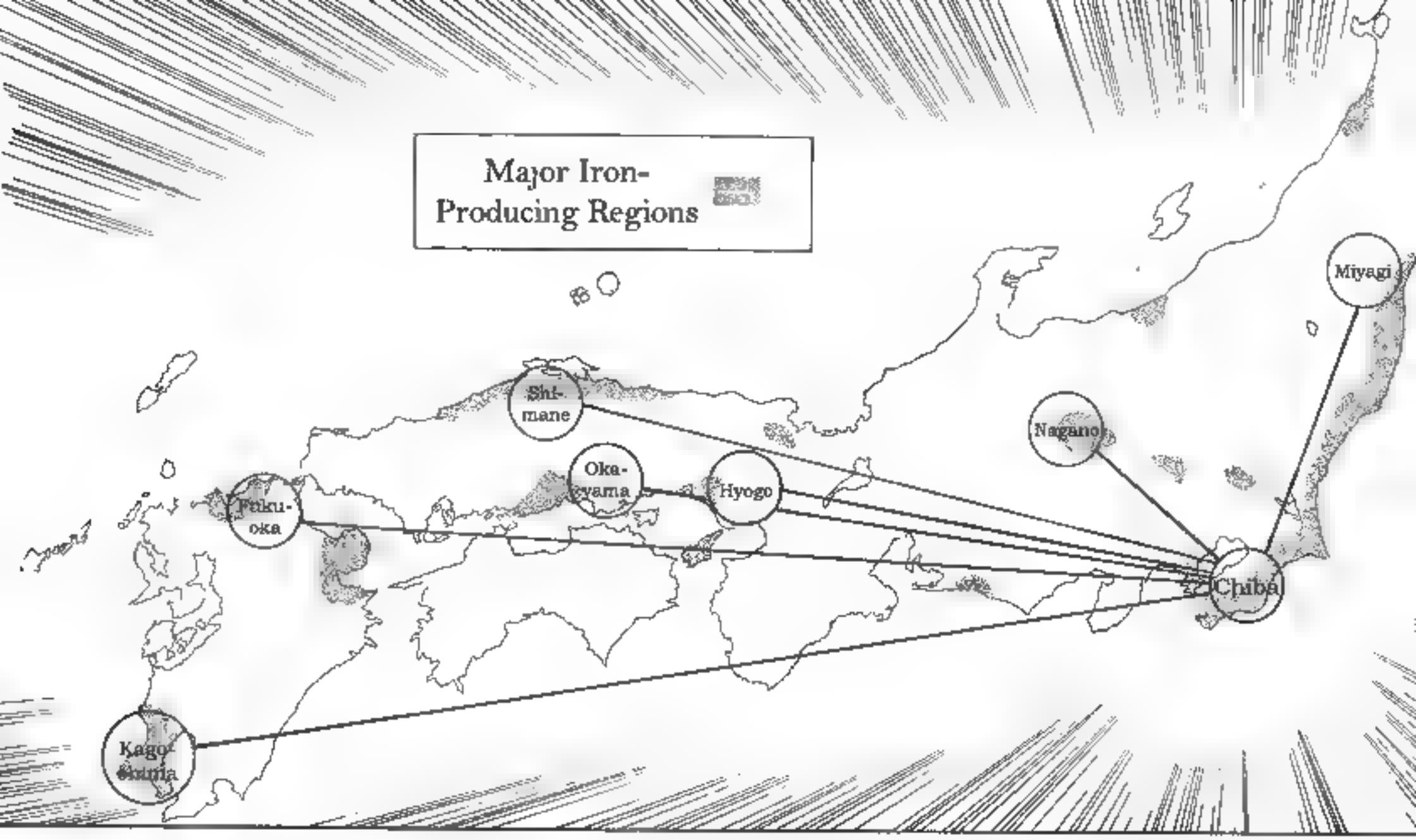
Inu-zuka Shino

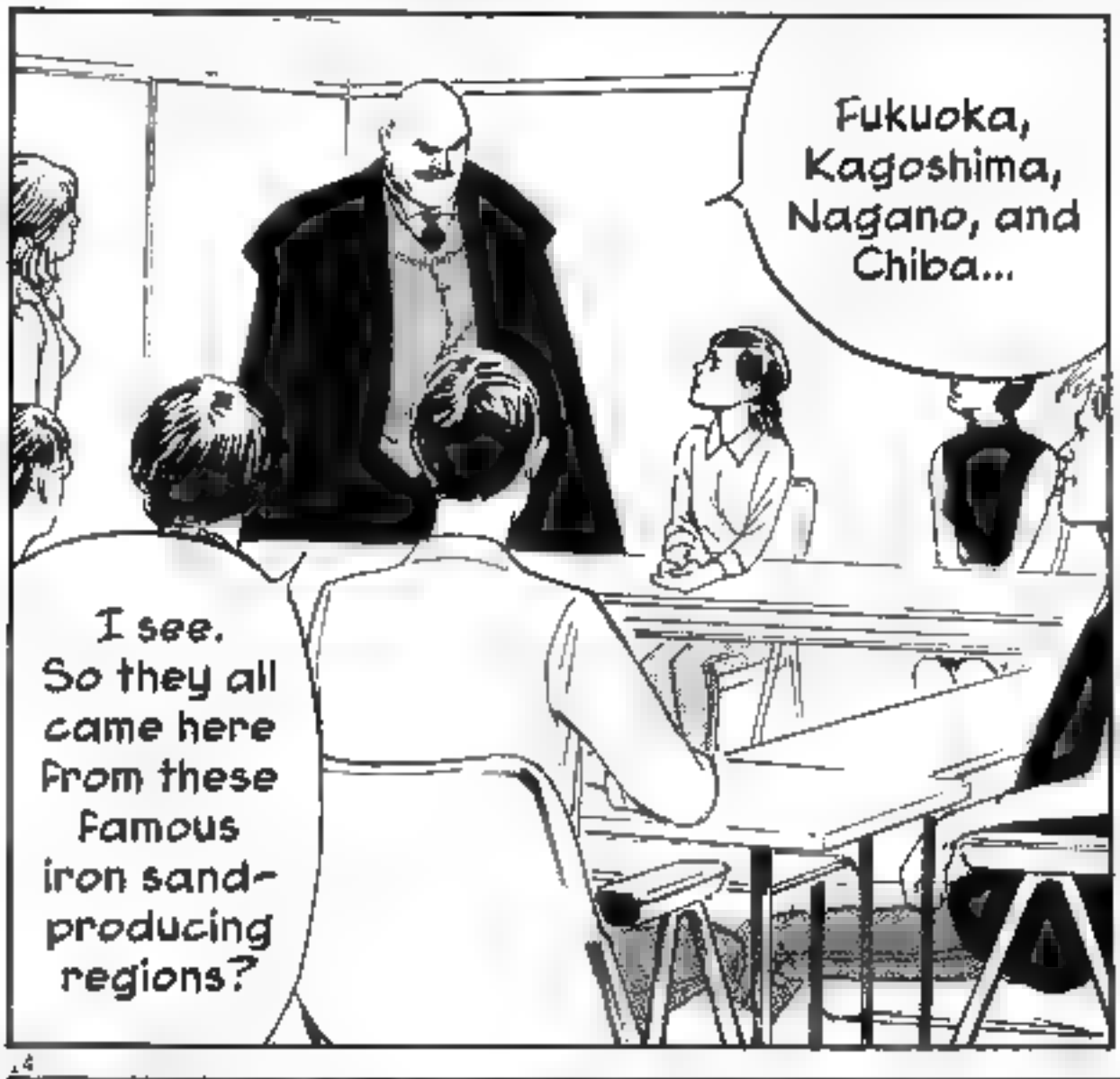
Inu kai Gen-pachi

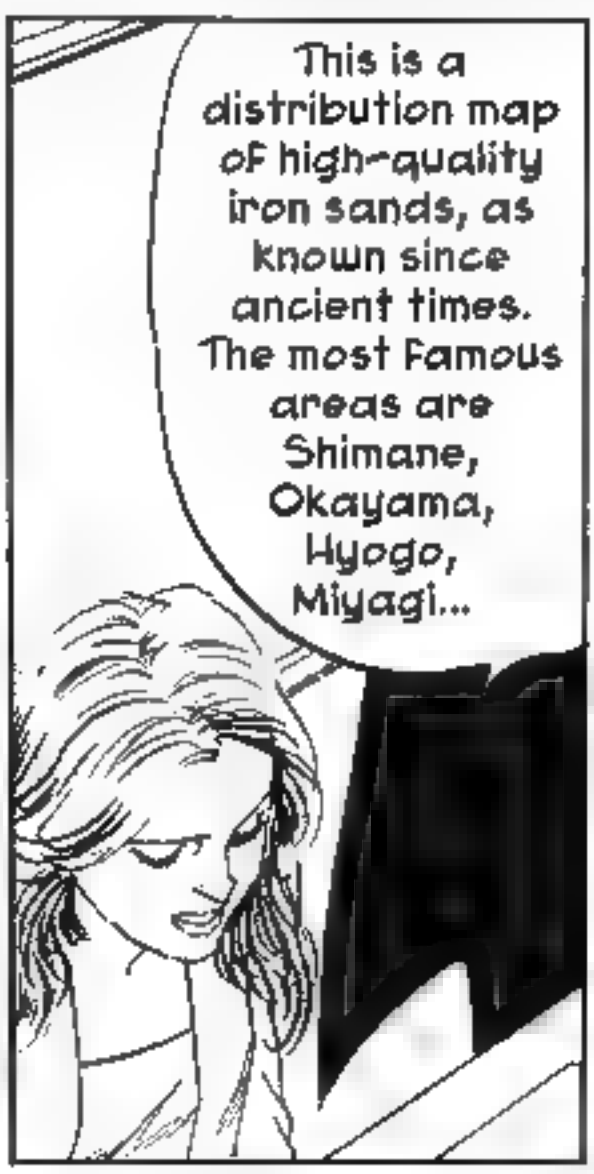
that they all had one thing in common.

I was quite surprised by such a rare co-incidence, so I asked them a lot of different questions.

And I found...

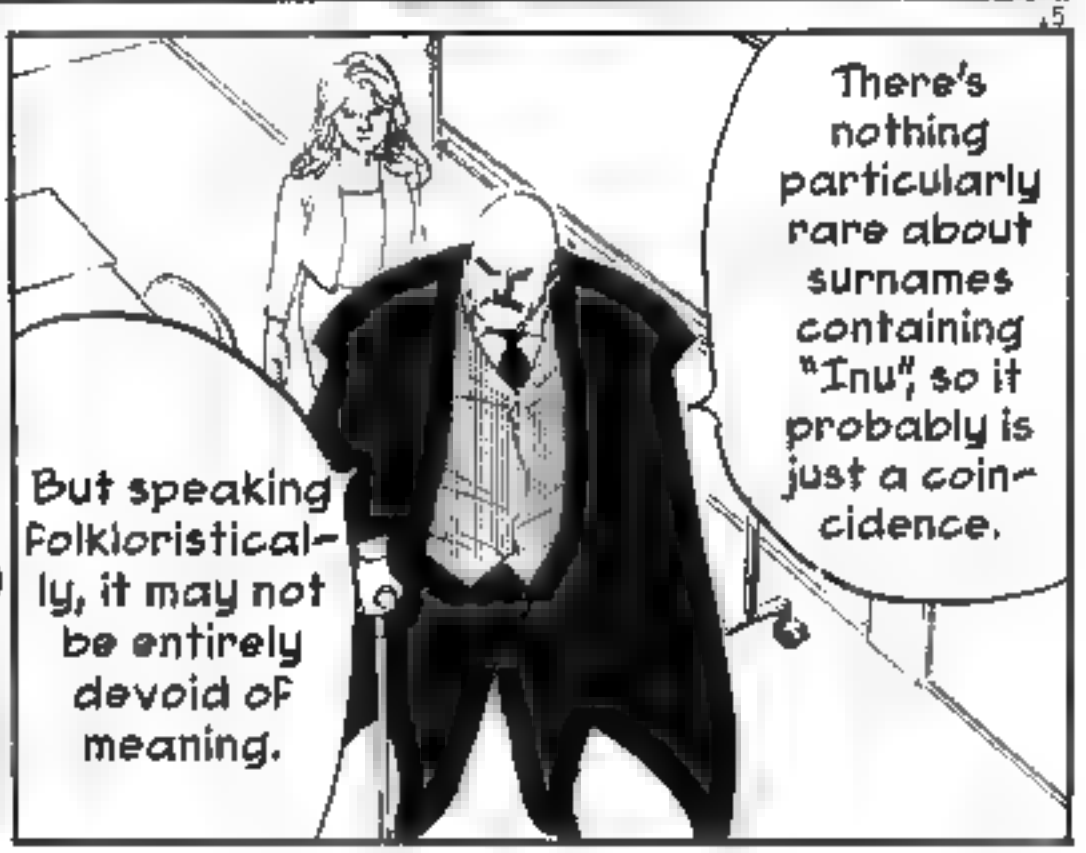

Major Iron-Producing Regions
Shi-mane
Oka-yama
Hyogo
Fuku-oka
Nagano
Miyagi
Chiba
Kago-shima


Fukuoka, Kagoshima, Nagano, and Chiba...
I see. So they all came here from these famous iron sand-producing regions?


This is a distribution map of high-quality iron sands, as known since ancient times. The most famous areas are Shimane, Okayama, Hyogo, Miyagi...

Exactly. So, Professor Munakata...

Eight students with "Inu" in their surname have gathered from eight iron sand-producing regions...
Is this merely a coincidence, or does it mean something?


There's nothing particularly rare about surnames containing "Inu", so it probably is just a coincidence.
But speaking folkloristically, it may not be entirely devoid of meaning.

Due to a lack of iron ore in Japan, most iron tools from ancient to modern times were made from iron sand.

The "Tatara Ironwork", in which iron sand is melted and mixed with char-coal...

And there were people that searched for regions that produced this useful resource, iron sand...

A group of people that explored hill and dale and traversed the coast in search of iron sand.
They were called "dogs".

The "Great God Kariba", a hunter god that appeared before Kukai on Mt. Takano, is followed by a white and black dog. Some say that they symbolize groups such as that.

So some of you may be the descendants of people that were involved in iron sands in your respective regions.

According to one theory, the leaders of these so-called "dogs" became the roots for names such as "Inugami" and "Inukai".

Inukai

Inugami

Inukai

18

I...IMPRESSIVE, PROFESSOR MUNAKATA! I ADMIRE THE FACT THAT YOU CAME TO THAT CONCLUSION ALMOST IMMEDIATELY!

Try using a magnet ...

The blackish flecks on the beach are iron sand!

Alright ...

Ohhhhhhh!

It guess that the "Tatara" kept their flames constantly lit.

The beaches from Kujukuri to Tohoku are rich in iron sand.

The Tatara were too inefficient for an age of mass production.

In the Meiji era, they began industrial iron manufacturing in places like Yahata, using imported iron ore.

But why did the Tatara ironwork disappear, Professor Munakata?

Well, this iron sand sounds pretty impressive...

But for the longest time until then, the Japanese would make everything from swords to farming tools, from pots and pans to cannons, from this iron sand.

IMIBE SHOICHIRO! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE...!?

Yamato Takeru ...!?

There's a legend at Hodosan Shrine in Chichibu that says that Yamato Takeru was saved from a wildfire by a black and white dog.

Just as your topic is "iron", I'm pursuing the legend of Yamato Takeru.

Yamato Takeru and dogs... This could make a good program!
When I heard about Satomi University's "Hakkenden" over there, it all clicked!
Doesn't that remind you of the dogs of the Great God Kariba that Kukai met?
Oh... Uh, well...
Program!? What's the meaning of this, Ms. Tamatsu?
Now, if I chart his Western and Eastern Conquests on a map...
Now this may be preaching to the choir, but Yamato Takeru was a hero of Japanese mythology, born as the son of Emperor Keiko, who conquered Kyushu to the west and Tohoku to the east.

Yamato Takeru's Western and Easter Conquests

Kojiki

Nihon Shoki

Major Iron Sand Producing Regions

by un-leashing the "dogs"!!

Yamato Takeru may represent a group that searched the nation for iron sand deposits,

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"In Kyoun year 1, the provincial governor Uneme-no-Asomi led the blacksmith Sabi-no-Omaro to the beaches of Wakamatsu in search of iron, and forged swords... The ore of the sands in the harbor of Aze was of great benefit for forging swords."

Chronicles of the Province of Hitachi, District of Kashima

It is no coincidence that the iron-rich Boso served as their base for their conquest of the Emishi of Tohoku.

And with swords made of iron sand, they could invade further inland...

They made farming implements out of iron sand, and cultivated the surrounding area, securing the fields with which they could support their population...

A campaign that doubled as a search for high-quality iron sand... This may have been the myth of "Yamato Takeru"!

Izumo, the nation's greatest iron-producing region, has the myth of Yamata-no-Orochi... The "Sword of Kusanagi" comes out of the Orochi's tail after it is defeated by Susanob.

This may have been a myth that represents the conquest of the blacksmiths of Izumo, who produced iron swords.

He First struck the Kumaso of Kyushu, then led his army to the Boso Peninsula so he could subjugate the eastern Emishi next.

And it was Yamato Takeru that inherited the Sword of Kusanagi... Thus making him the prince of iron!

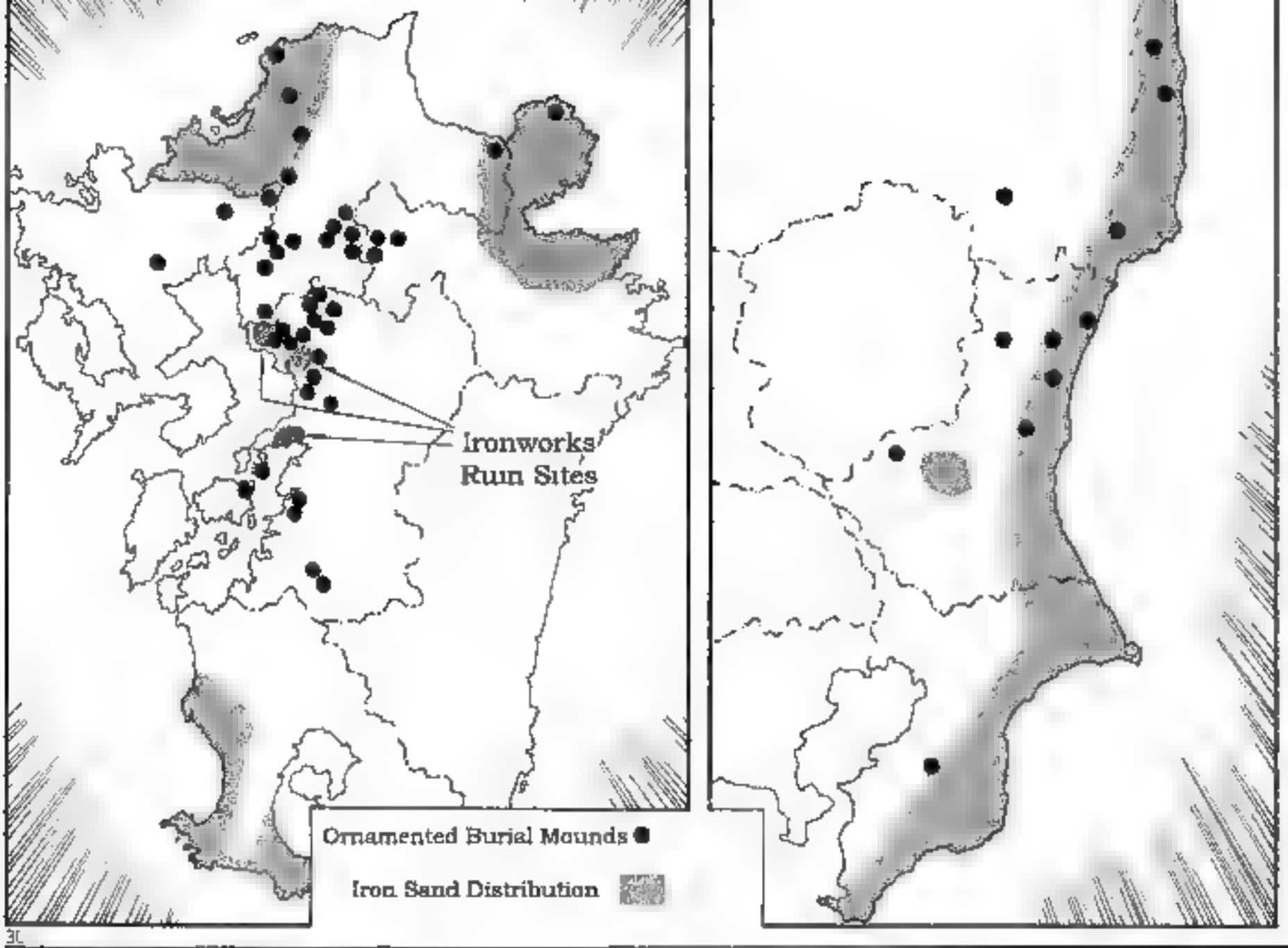
"Ornamented burial mounds", with murals and engravings, were quite common in ancient Kyushu, but rarely seen in any other regions.

Hinooka Burial Mound, Fukuoka Prefecture

Toratsuka Burial Mound, Ibaraki Prefecture

The only place where comparable ornamented burial mounds have been discovered is the region between Boso and Tohoku...

Chibusan Burial Mound, Kumamoto Prefecture



Kashima City

Sea of Kashima

Kashima

There is a Kashima City in Kyushu that faces the Sea of Ariake, but in this region there is also the Kashima District From the Chronicles... as well as the Sea of Kashima and Kashima Shrine.

Kashima Shrine, Ibaraki Prefecture

"(In the reign of Emperor Sujin,) Takekashima-no-Mikoto was sent to subjugate the savage insurgents that lay to the East."

Chronicles of the Province of Hitachi, District of Namekata

Could this mean that a tribe from Kyushu, with the civilization of ironworks and ornamented burial mounds, travelled to Boso and built a new "Kashima" there!?

You could say that their actions, as subjects to the Yamato government, may have been the prototype for the myth of Yamato Takeru.

32

.....

Yaa aaa aaa ωn ...

This was entirely separate from my request to you, Professor Munakata.

I casually told this to one of my friends that works at a TV station, and it somehow escalated to this...

Hmm. Nothing good can ever come of being involved with them.

They're people that flock to bait, devour everything as they please, and leave. They're even worse than crows!

They said that Satomi University might have a chance at getting a folkloristics department if the story of the "Hakkenden" students becomes a hot topic, so I accepted their request to cover us.

I was wondering if you could look at this photograph, Professor Munakata ...

Photograph?

Excuse me...

That's a "bracken sword"!

The photograph itself seems rather old. Is it part of a personal collection?

My great-grandfather took this photograph before the war, but the sword was lost during the war.

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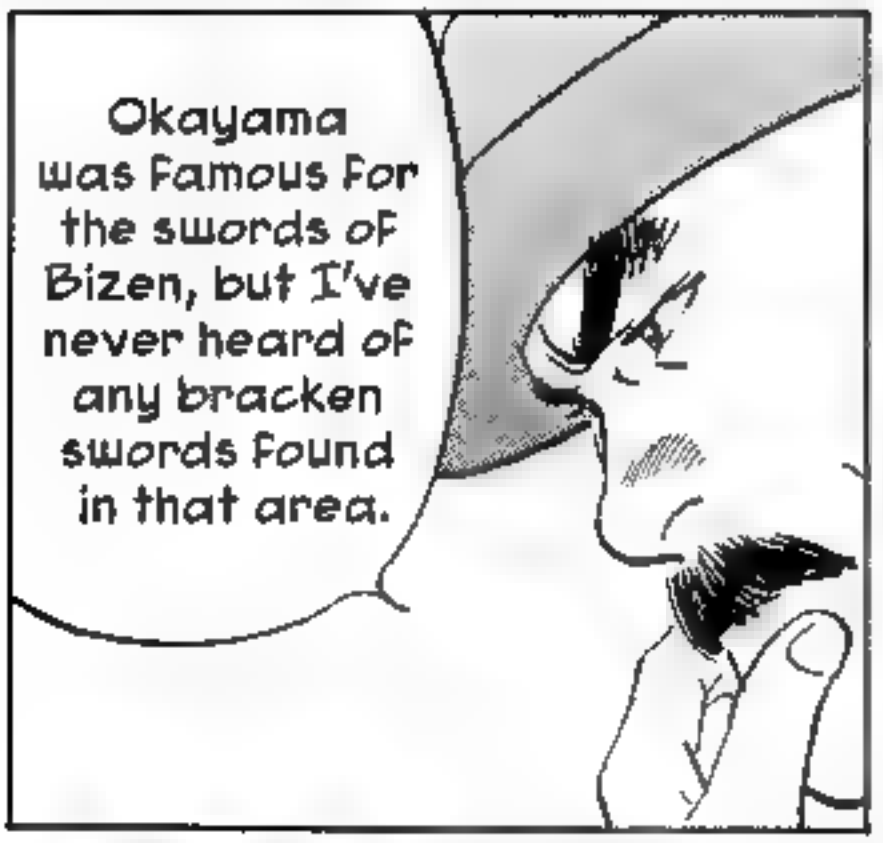
It's called a bracken sword, because the hilt resembles the wild plant called "bracken".

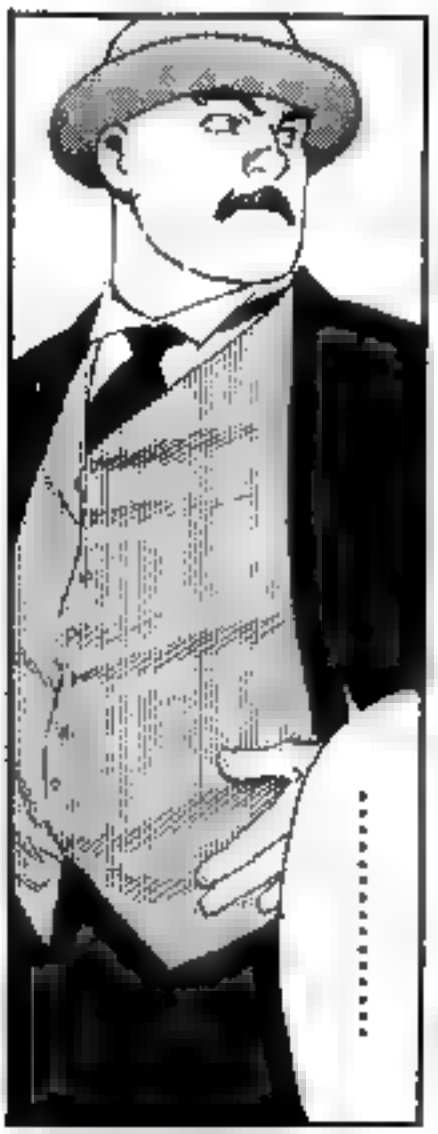
It's also called the "Mokusa Sword", after the name of an area famous for producing them.

I think my family was once a line of swordsmiths... But did katanas used to be shaped like that?

No, this is a sword that predates the katana!


Okayama was famous for the swords of Bizen, but I've never heard of any bracken swords found in that area.

You said you were Miss Inukai, from Okayama?
Y... Yes.


.....

Do you know anything about this, Ms. Tam...?

Huh ...?

By the way, is Inukai really your surname?

According to the Chronicles, "Sabi-no-Omaro" came here to find iron sand for making swords.

"Sabi" means "rust", but it was also an obsolete word that refers to iron.

The army of ironworkers that was led by Takekashima was likely to be a clan by the name of "O" or "Ou".

"Om-aro" ...

And in Boso, there is "Ou"...

"O" in Kyushu, "Ou" in Izumo, and "Ou" in Kinai are thought to be related to this clan.

O-no-Yasumaro, who compiled the Kojiki, was a member of the O Clan. It's also a place name...

This old shrine is said to be the original Kashima Shrine...

Itako City, Ibaraki Prefecture Ou

Ou Shrine

!!! !!!

The people that branched off from the O Clan in Kyushu must've migrated here, right, Chairman Takemogi?

The O Clan, that excelled in ironworks and military might, migrated in search of iron sand, and moved all over the country. They were eventually forgotten from history..

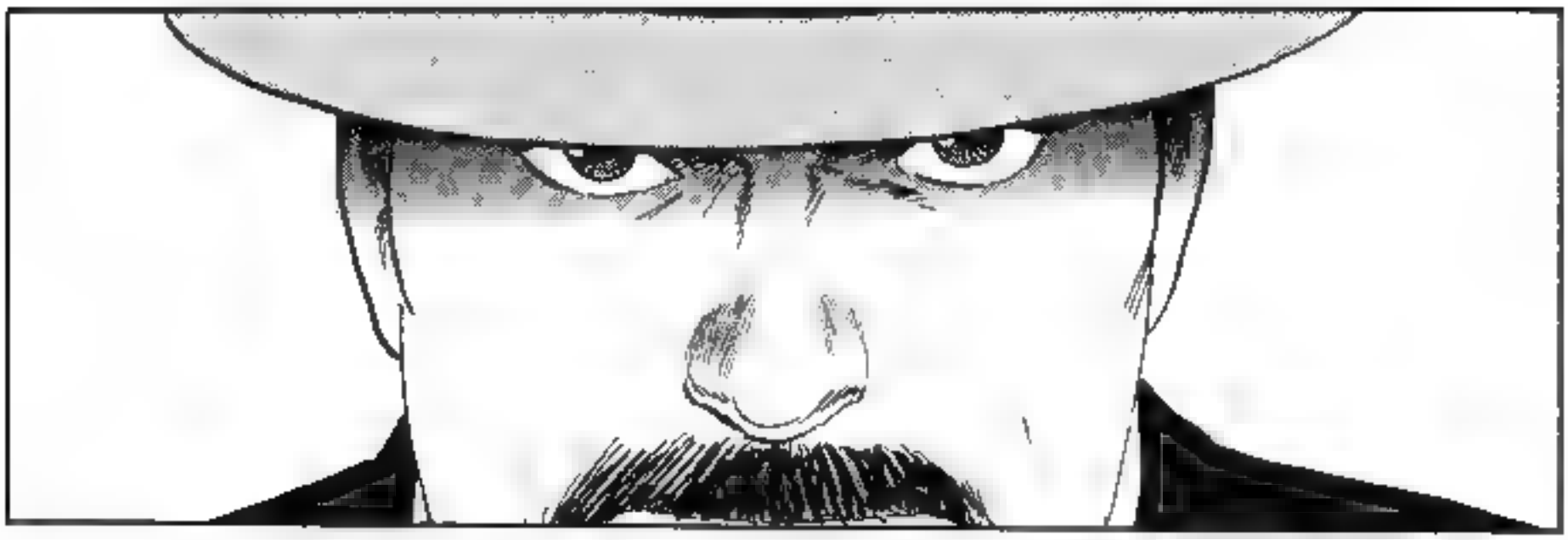
But Ogakuen University, born from the O Clan of Kyushu, will conquer the land of Kanto once more!

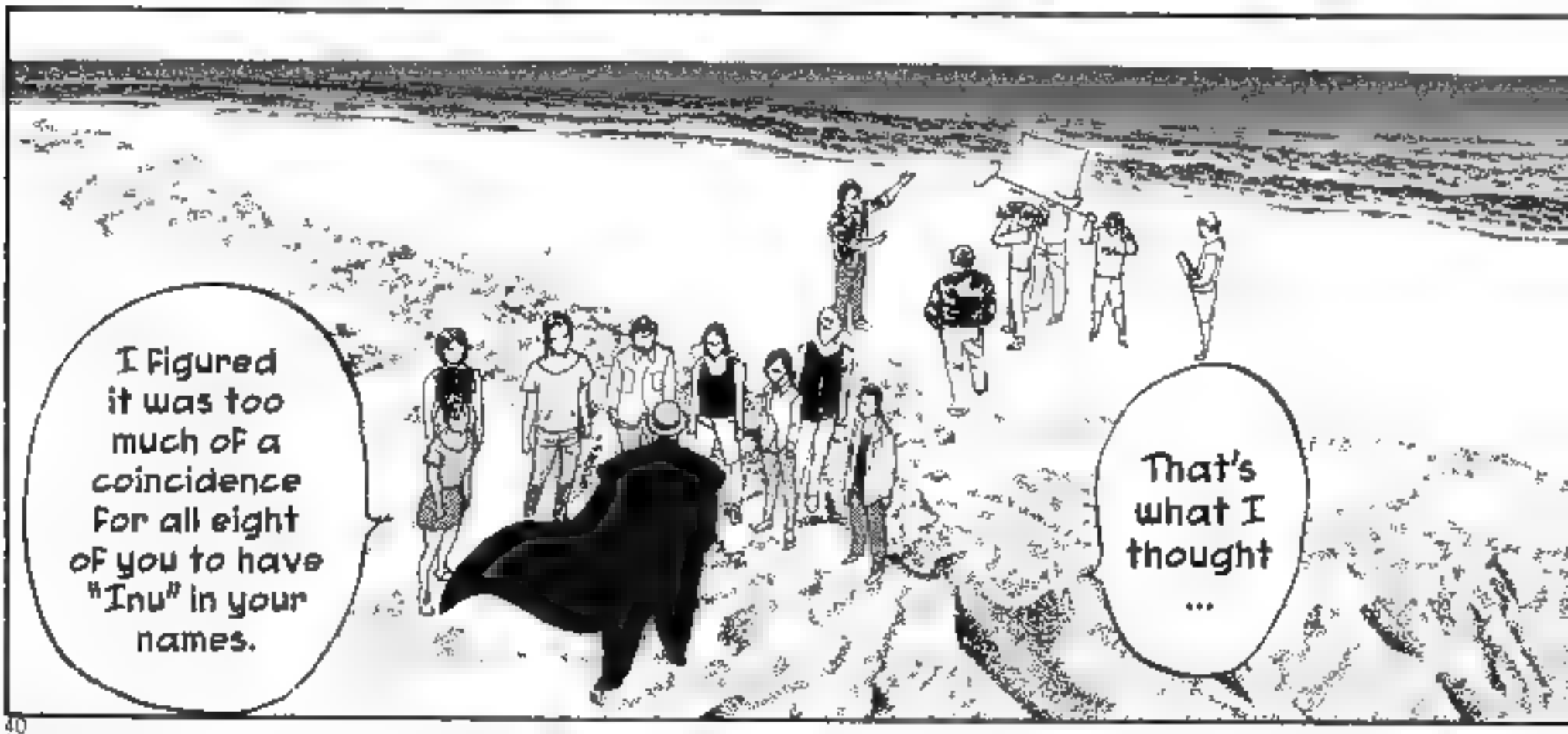
First, we will merge with Satomi University in Chiba, then swallow the East Asia University of Culture in Tokyo!

The "Ogakuen" brand will subjugate East Japan!

We will mass-produce the uniform submissive students that our business demands!

WELCOME! HELLO!! WE WILL GLADLY STUDY!!




I figured it was too much of a coincidence for all eight of you to have "Inu" in your names.
That's what I thought ...

And cut!

Whose idea was this!?
I'm sorry... Inuzuka here is the only one that has "Inu" in his name, and the rest of us have normal names.

DID YOU MAKE THEM TAKE PART IN A HAKKENDEN HOAX WITH PROMISES OF MONEY AND TV APPEAR-ANCES!?
WAS IT YOU, IMI-BE!?

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR TAMATSU ASKED US TO DO THIS! SHE SAID THIS WAS FOR THE UNIVERSITY...

NO, PRO-FESSOR MUNA-KATA, HE DIDN'T!
W-W-WHA ...!?

41

AND IT'S ALL A LIE!? THE NAMES WITH INU AND THE HAKKEN-DEN!?

Y...YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING ME! THAT ASSISTANT PROFESSOR APPROACHED US WITH THIS STORY!

Grrrrrrrrrrr...

Come to think of it, I feel like she's been testing me right from the start...

.....

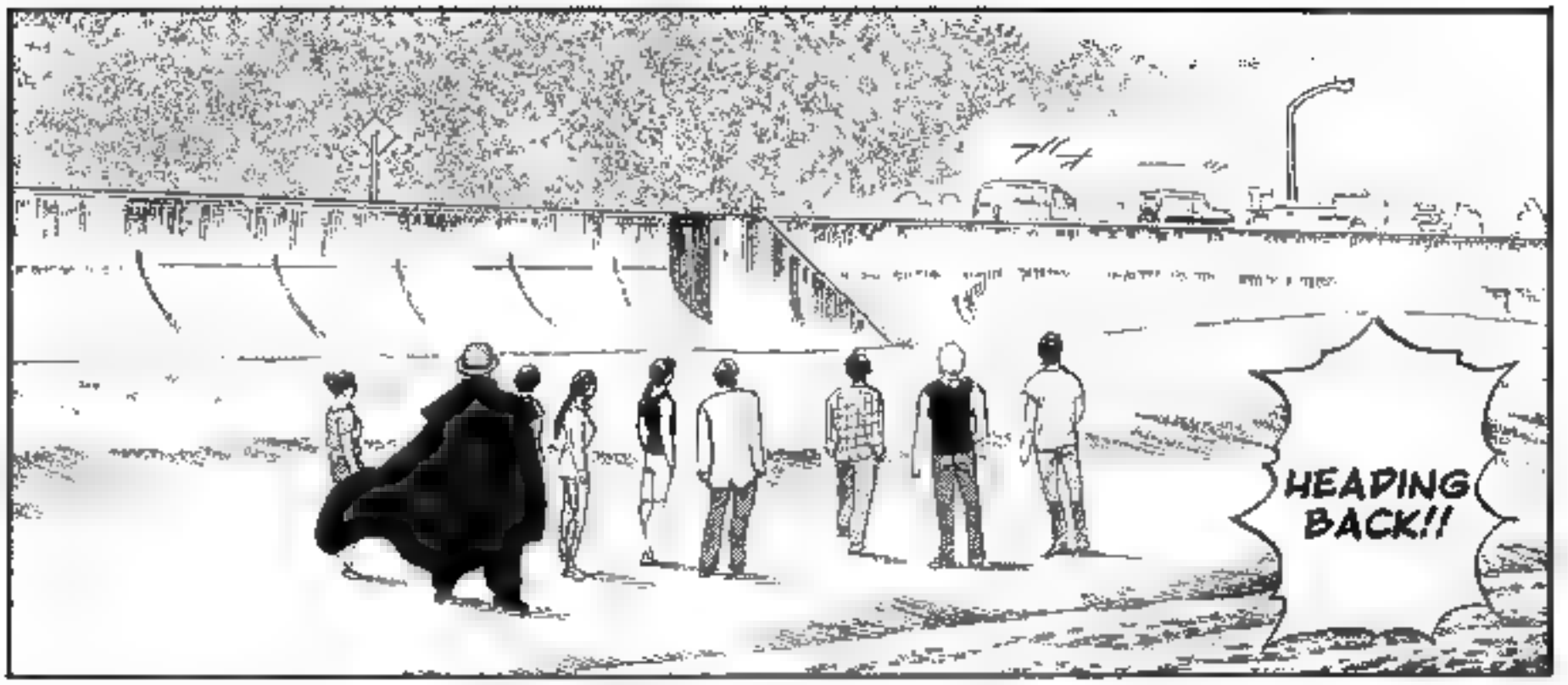
W-Wait just a second! This wasn't directly related to Yamato Takeru, and it's not too late to start the recording again...

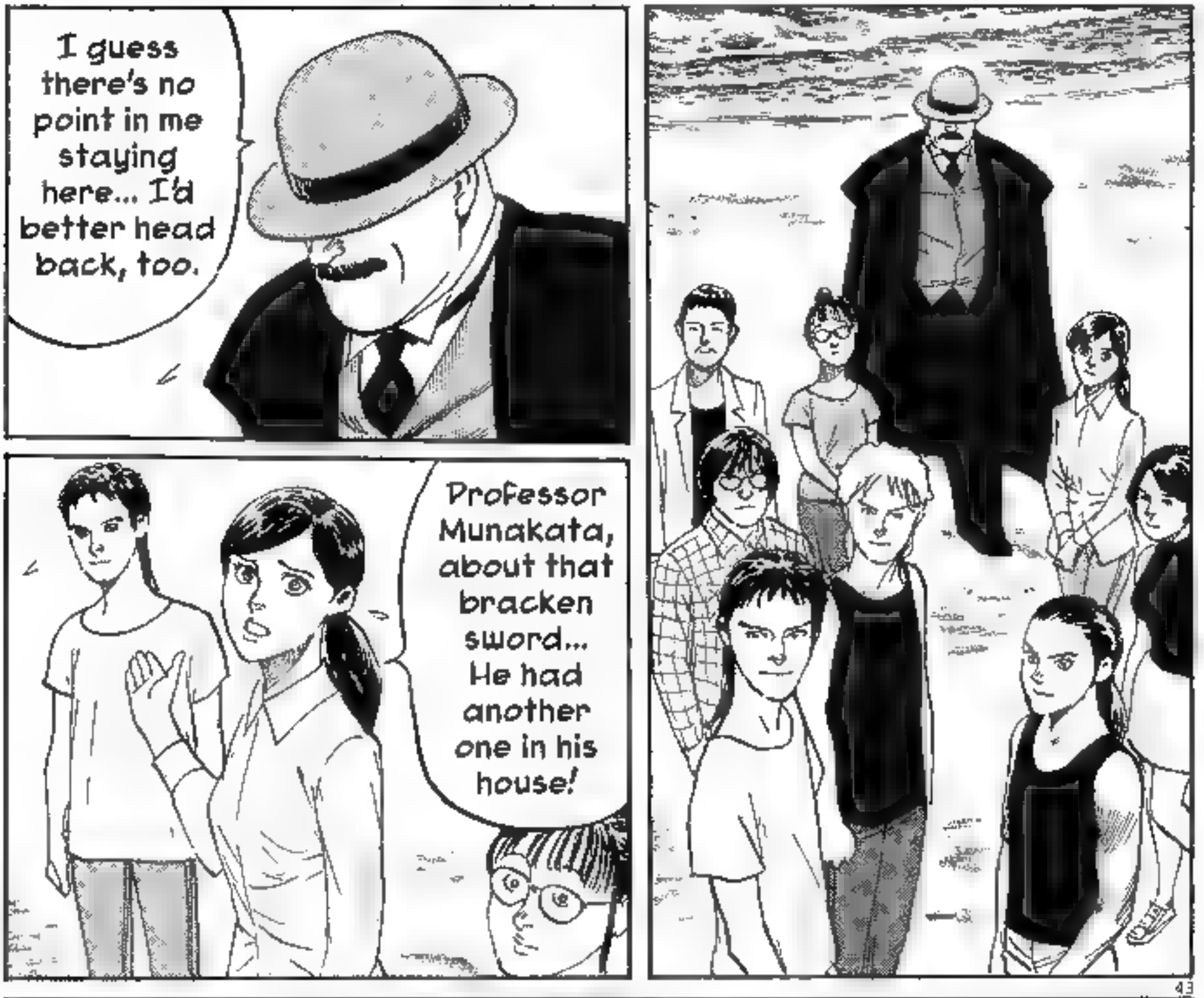
I'm afraid we're in trouble, Mr. Imibe. There are already rumors going around that we're a hoax program. If the station finds out about this, heads will roll!

42

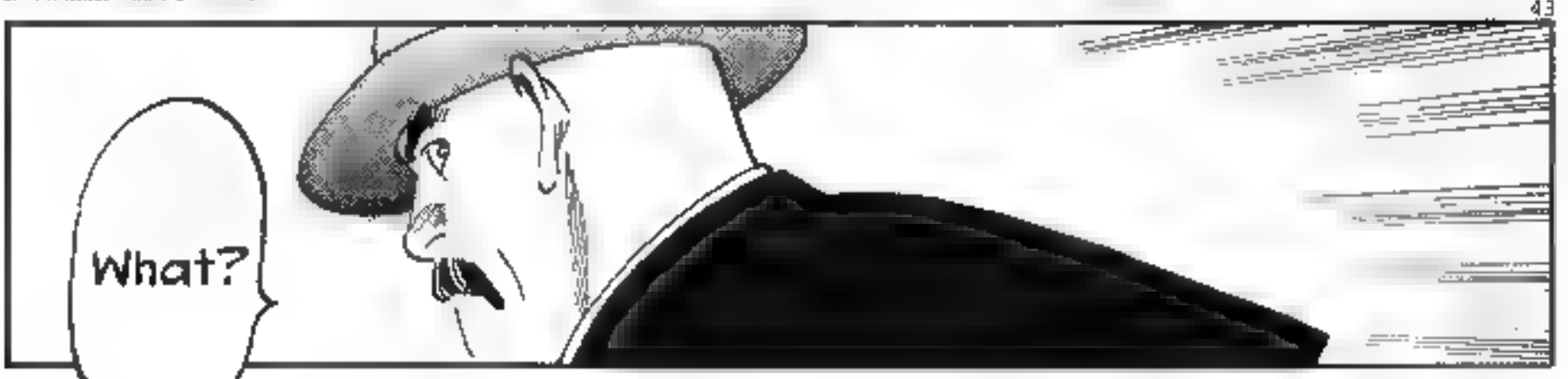
WE'RE LEAV-ING FOR NOW!

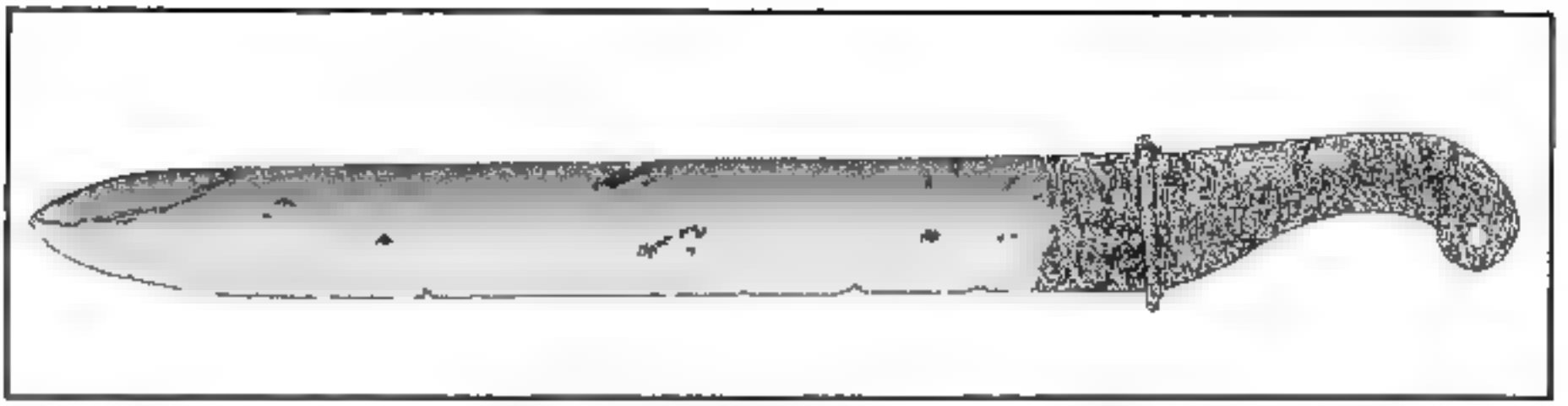
LET'S HEAD BACK!


HEADING BACK!!


I guess there's no point in me staying here... I'd better head back, too.
Professor Munakata, about that bracken sword... He had another one in his house!

43


What?



My real name's Mikami. We don't have anything like that, but I did hear we were swordsmiths right up until the Edo Period.

It was all rusty, but I remember that the hilt was round. Oh, and my real name's Ishimaru.

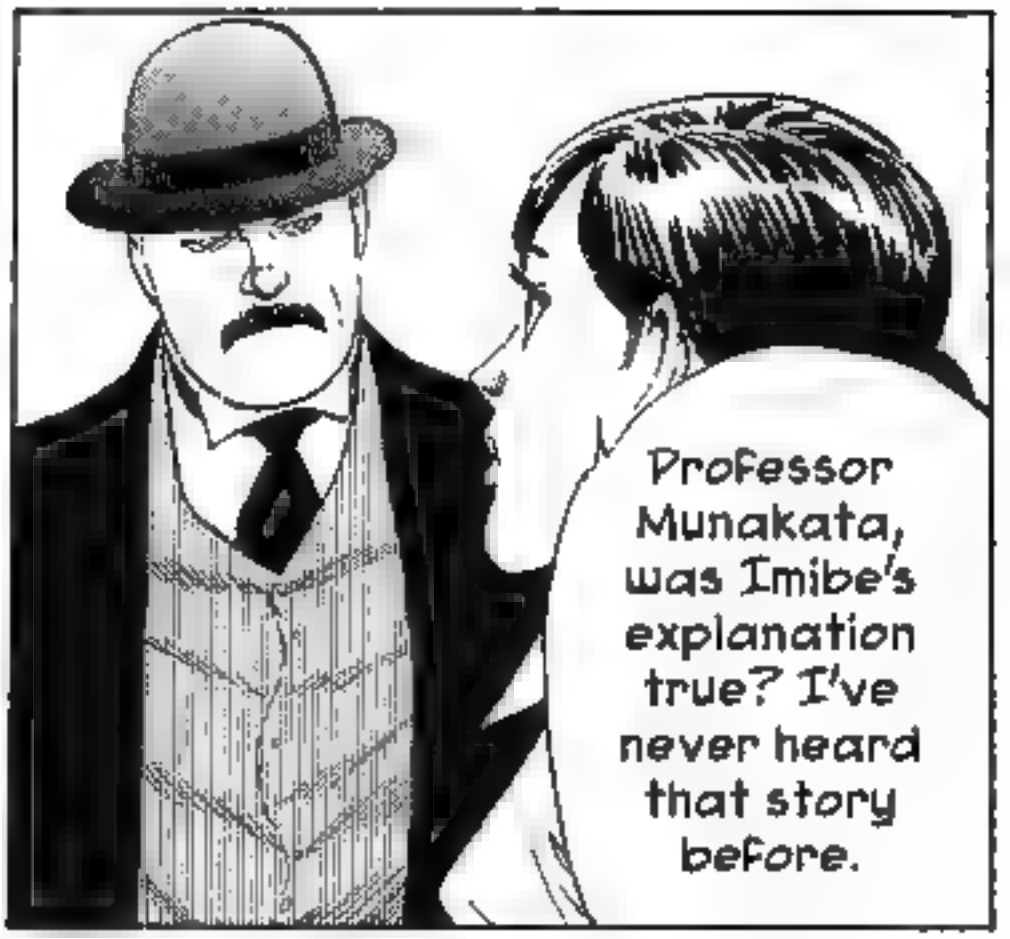
I'm Fukue. My family helped mine iron sand in the off-season.

I'm Kageyama. I once heard that everyone in my grandfather's village worked as a "Tatara"...

44

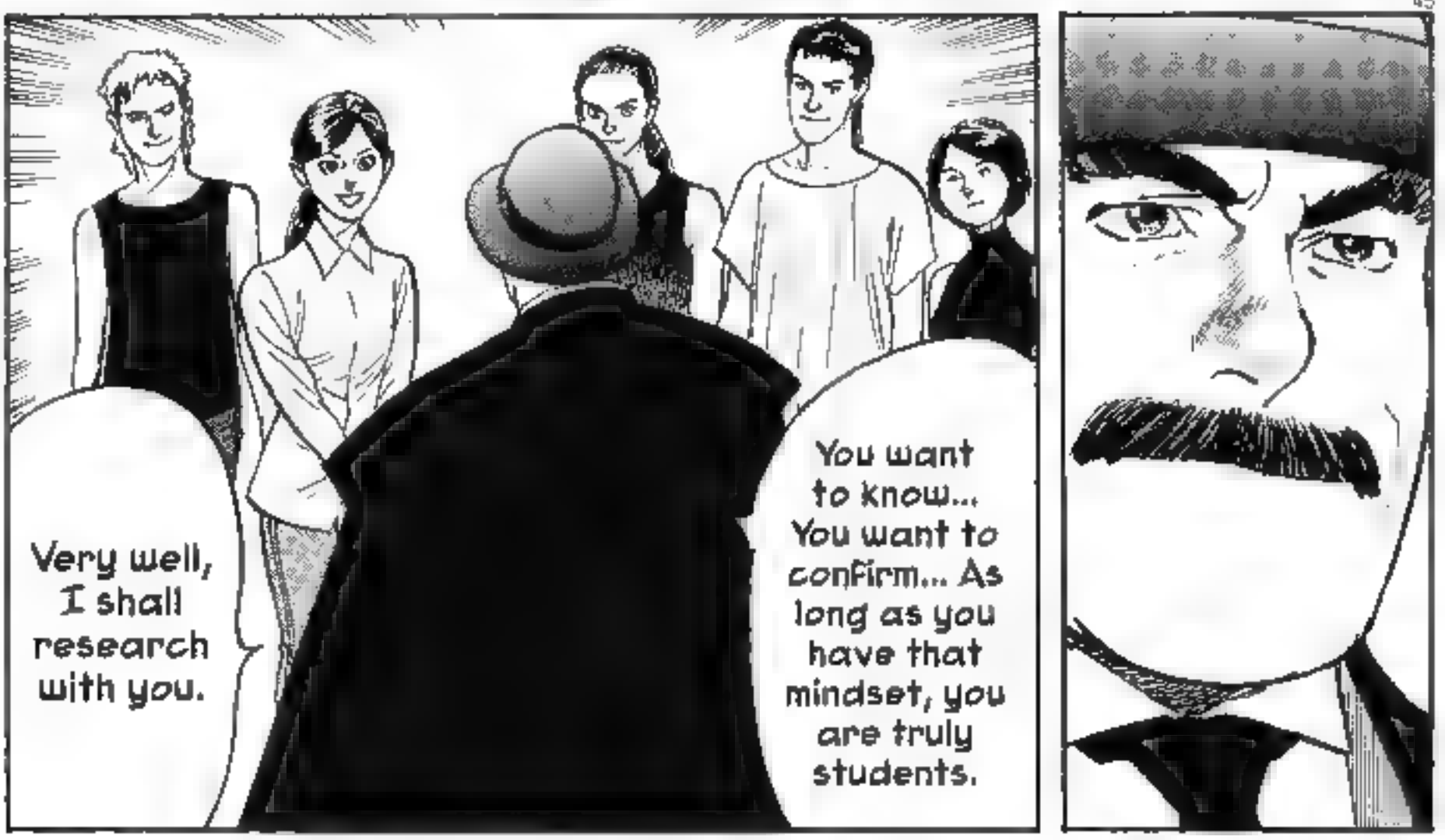
None of us were lying about our hometowns, but when we all heard that our families were involved in iron, we felt a strange sort of "connection"...

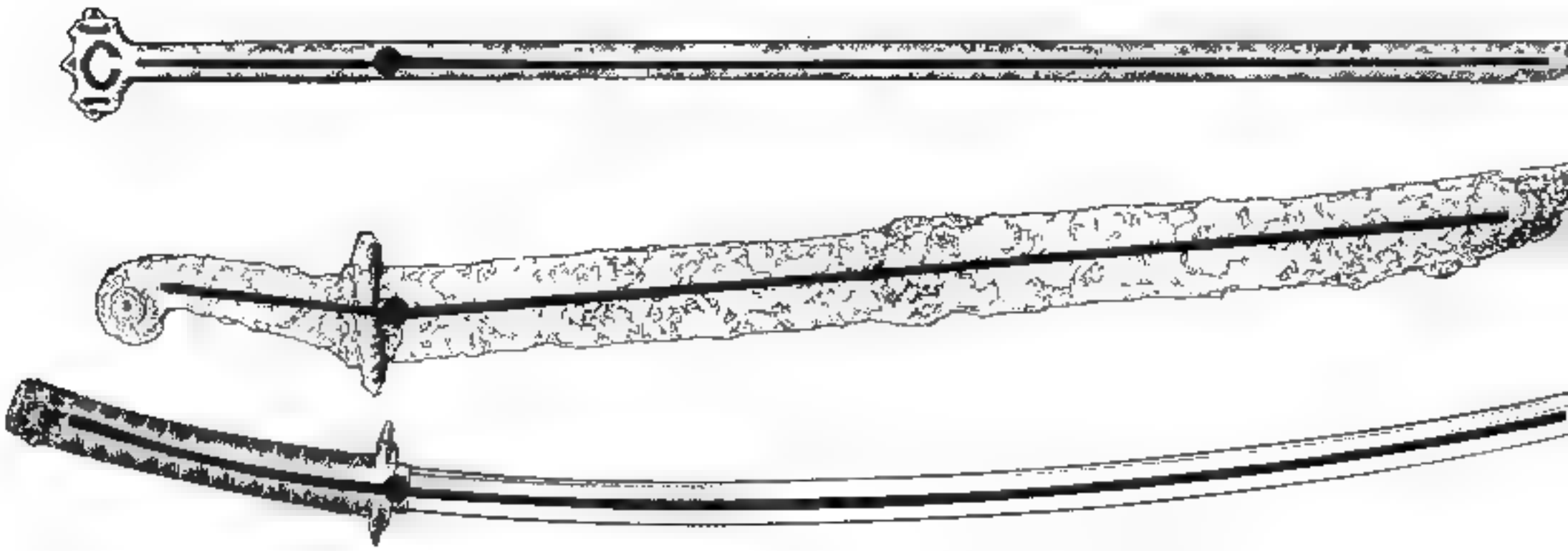
Do the rest of you want to know, too?


Professor Munakata, was Imibe's explanation true? I've never heard that story before.

Does "iron sand" have some kind of connection to our roots?
What's a bracken sword?
What's it doing in my house?

45


Very well, I shall research with you.
You want to know... You want to confirm... As long as you have that mindset, you are truly students.

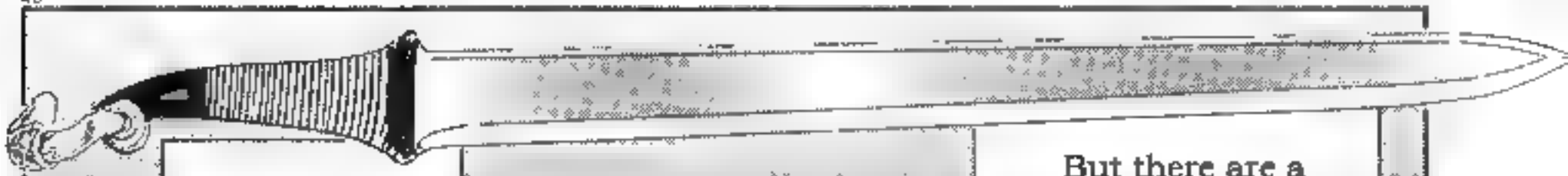


The "bracken sword" could cut better than a straight sword due to the "arch" in its hilt and blade.

It's believed that this "arch" became a curve, and it evolved into the "katana".

Excavations of these swords are overwhelmingly concentrated in Tohoku. This would mean that they were superior swords created by the "Emishi" that lived in that region.

Bracken Sword Discovery Sites



What does this wide range of dispersion mean?

But there are a handful that were discovered in other regions, from Kanto to Chubu, Izumo, Shikoku, and even Kyushu.

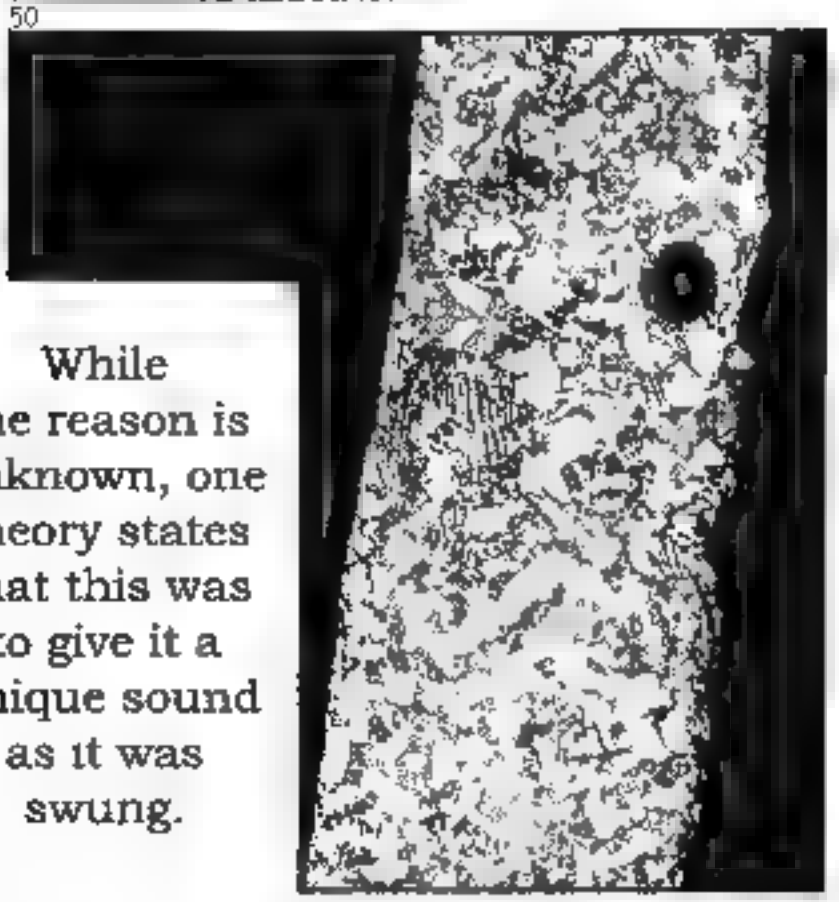
Perhaps we can assume the opposite as well, that the sword-smiths of Tohoku that made the bracken swords scattered to different regions.

If there was a group that invaded Boso and Tohoku from Kyushu, like the myth of Yamato Takeru...

Nagahama Blacksmith
Osafune of Bizen
Hojoji Kunimitsu
Sanjo of Kyoto
Nagasone-Kotetsu
Magoroku of Seki
Muramasa of Ise
Masamune of Sagami
The swordsmiths scattered to all the major iron-producing regions, and at their hands the bracken sword evolved to the katana, and they forged the famous swords.

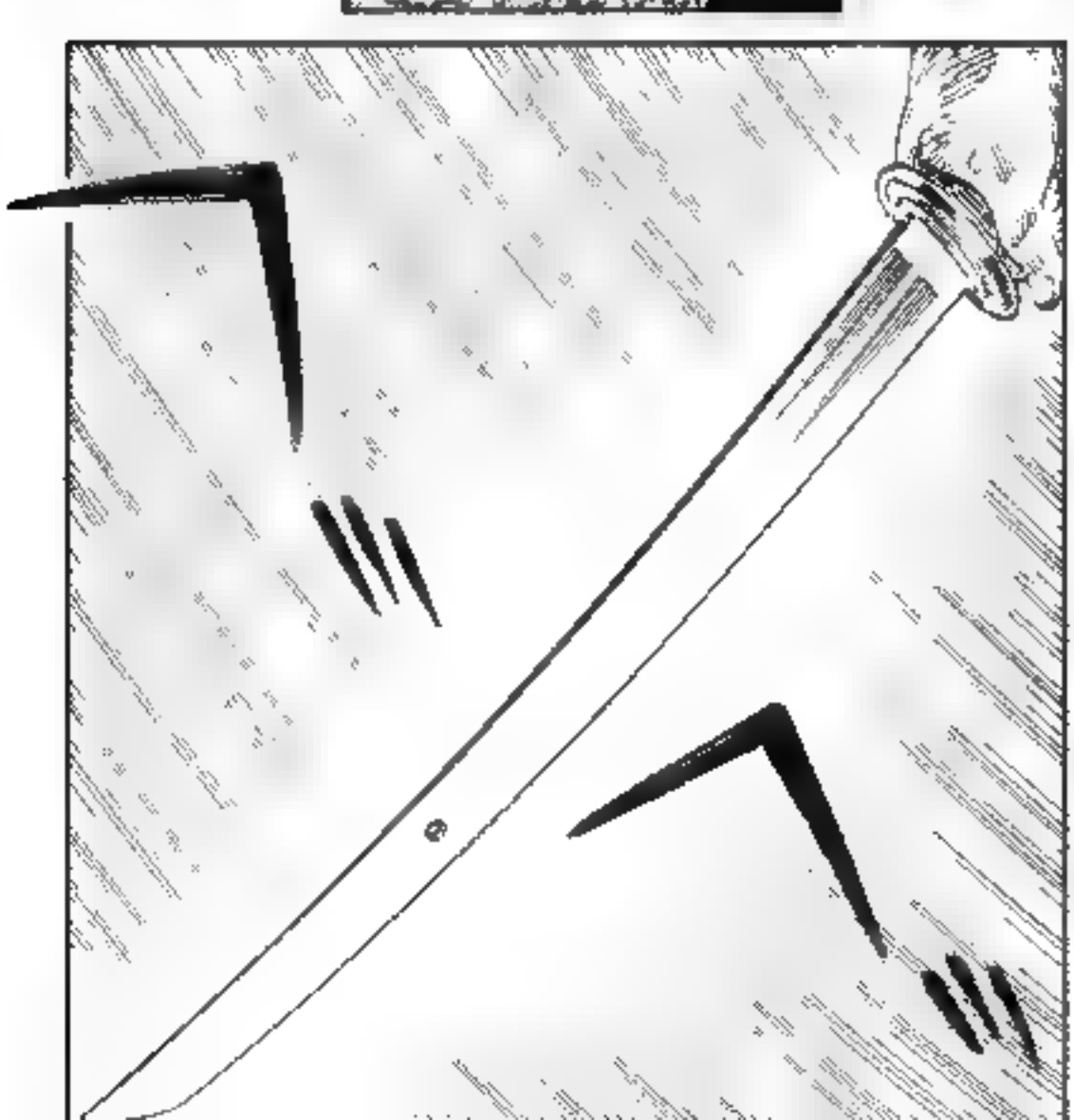
It could be that their blood runs through you, as well!

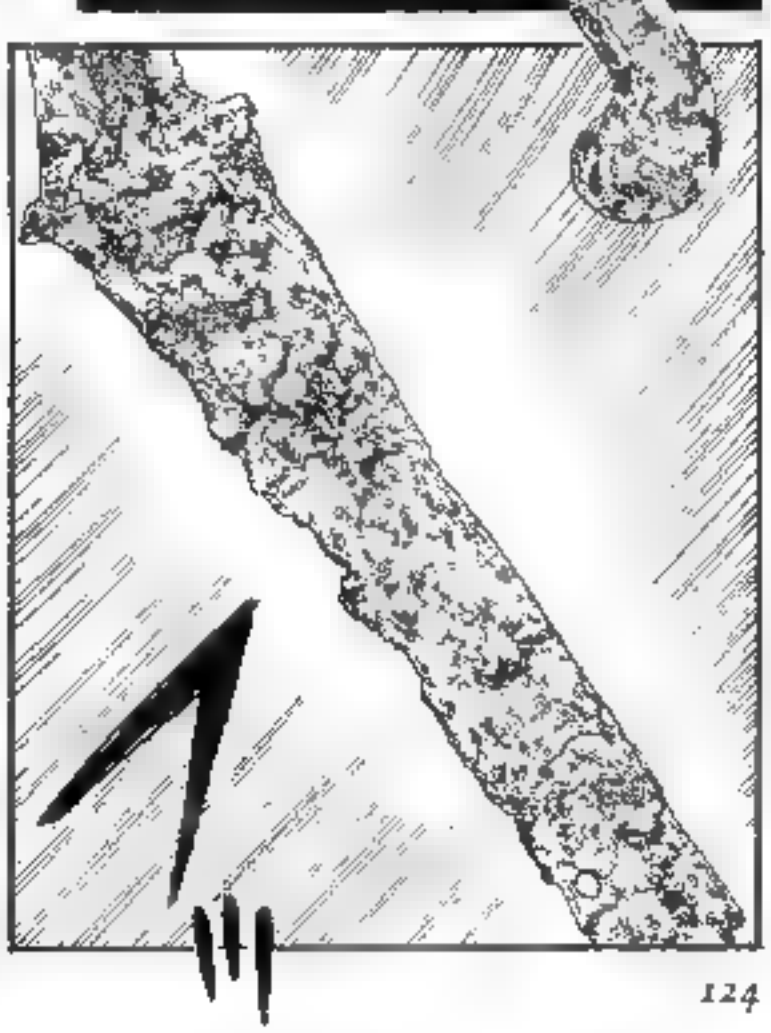
Some of them have small holes that were intentionally bored through the blade.



While the reason is unknown, one theory states that this was to give it a unique sound as it was swung.

The "Bracken Sword" of the ancient East, evolved from the straight sword, and what would eventually be the prototype for the katana..





The divine sword in the Nihon Shoki, called "Futsu-no-Mitama", is said to represent this "fu!" sound...

布都霊

ふつのみたま

Futsu-no-Mitama

経津主

ふつぬし

Futsunushi

The deification of this sword is called "Futsunushi", who is enshrined in Katori Shrine, which ranks alongside Kashima Shrine.

Katori City,
Chiba Prefecture
Katori Shrine

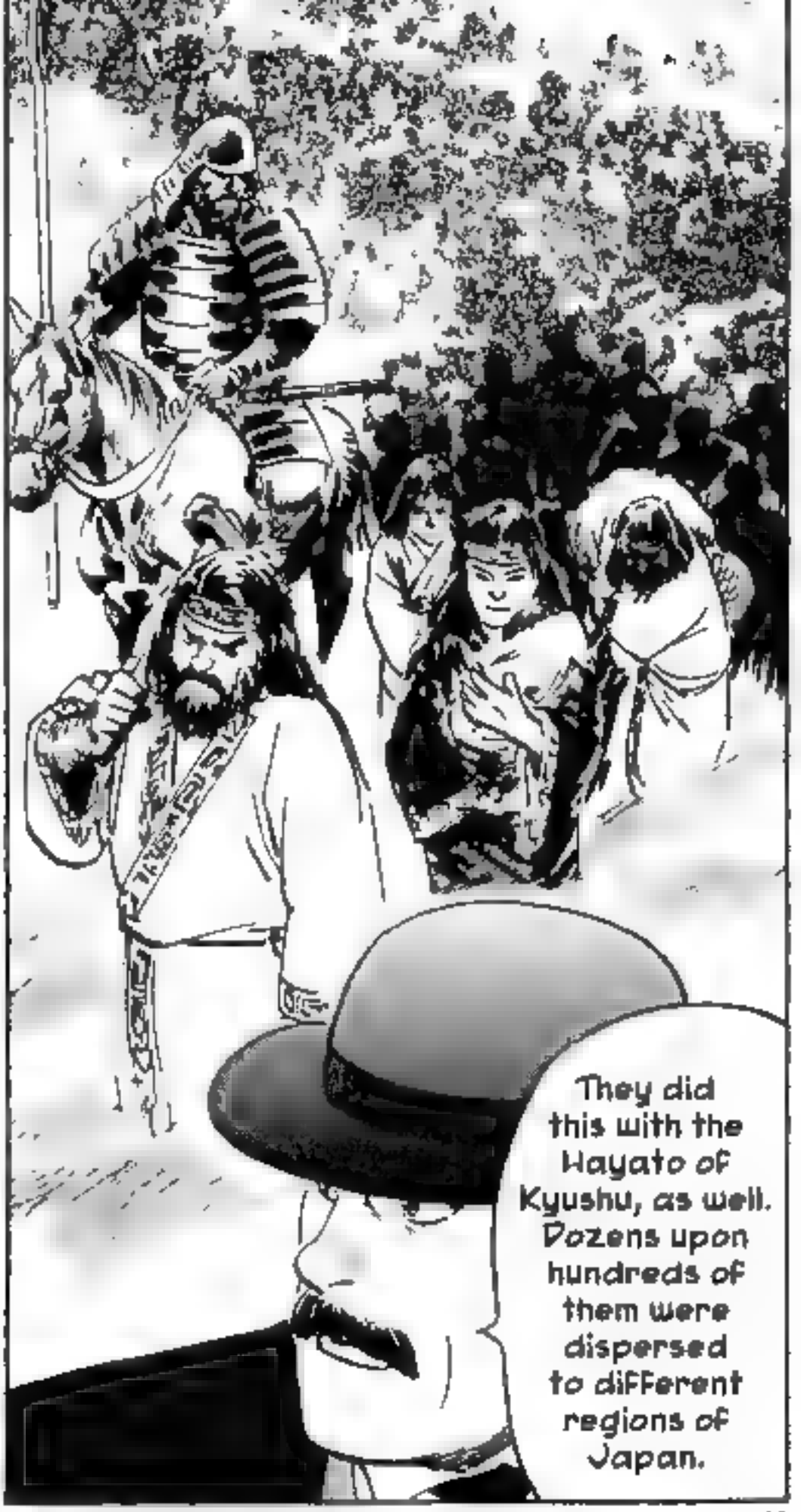
The truth behind the myth of Yamato Takeru's Eastern Conquest may well have been an ironworking tribe of Kyushu that marched East to secure iron sand deposits.

52

Forcibly emigrated!?

They apparently took the Emishi swordsmiths that made the bracken swords captive, and they were forcibly emigrated to different regions.

But on the other hand...


They did this with the Hayato of Kyushu, as well. Dozens upon hundreds of them were dispersed to different regions of Japan.

They were referred to in the records as "captives", and they were moved to set-apart land, sometimes with their whole family. These lands were segregated and called "Bessho".

Even now, there are a few dozen places throughout the country with the name "Bessho", and many of these have traces of ancient ironworks.

The swords made by the captives of the Bessho were called "captive swords", and were highly valued...

54

Same here!

Me, too!

Come to think of it, there's a place called Bessho where I'm from!

Perhaps it was to make sure the bracken swords weren't going to the Emishi? They couldn't resist if they didn't have enough swords.

But why would they need the swordsmiths to migrate?

That must've taken a lot of time and effort...

They picked out a migration site for them, and let them live with their family... That's pretty hospitable!

Well, wouldn't it have been easier to kill them all, terrible as that may sound?

It must've been so they could forge swords for the Court's army...

They let them settle in land suited for ironworks, with the order to make swords better than the bracken sword.

55

.....

...Oh, right.

Hiraizumi: Hair Tweezer Style Bracken Sword

Ise Shrine: Hair Tweezer Style Longsword

Katana

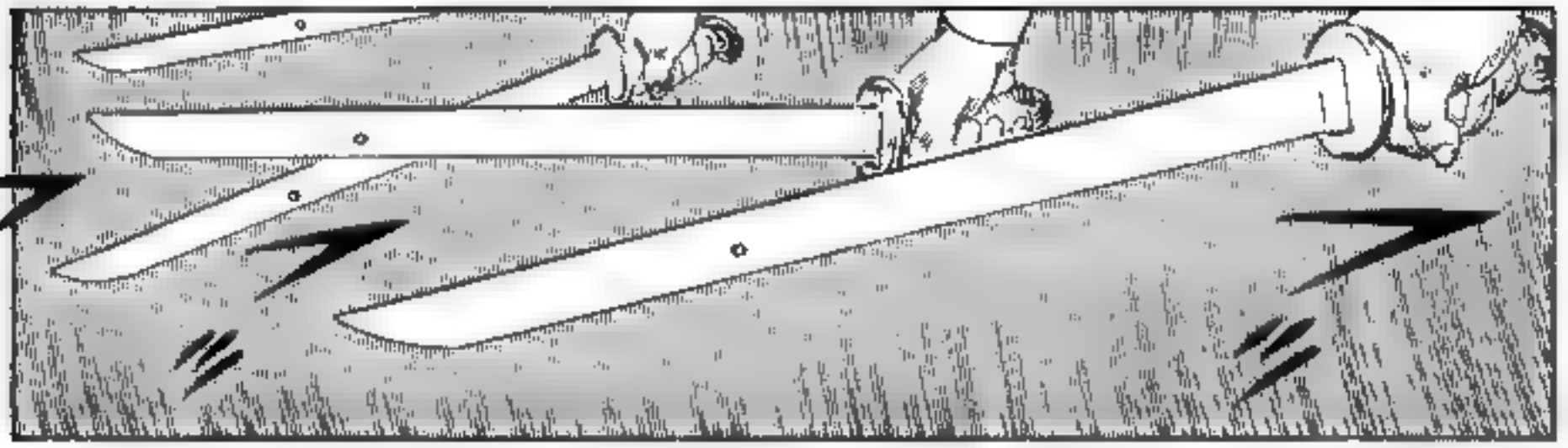
Their craftsmanship took root in their respective Bessho, which became lands that produced famous swords such as Bizen and Seki.

5b

And those are our hometowns...

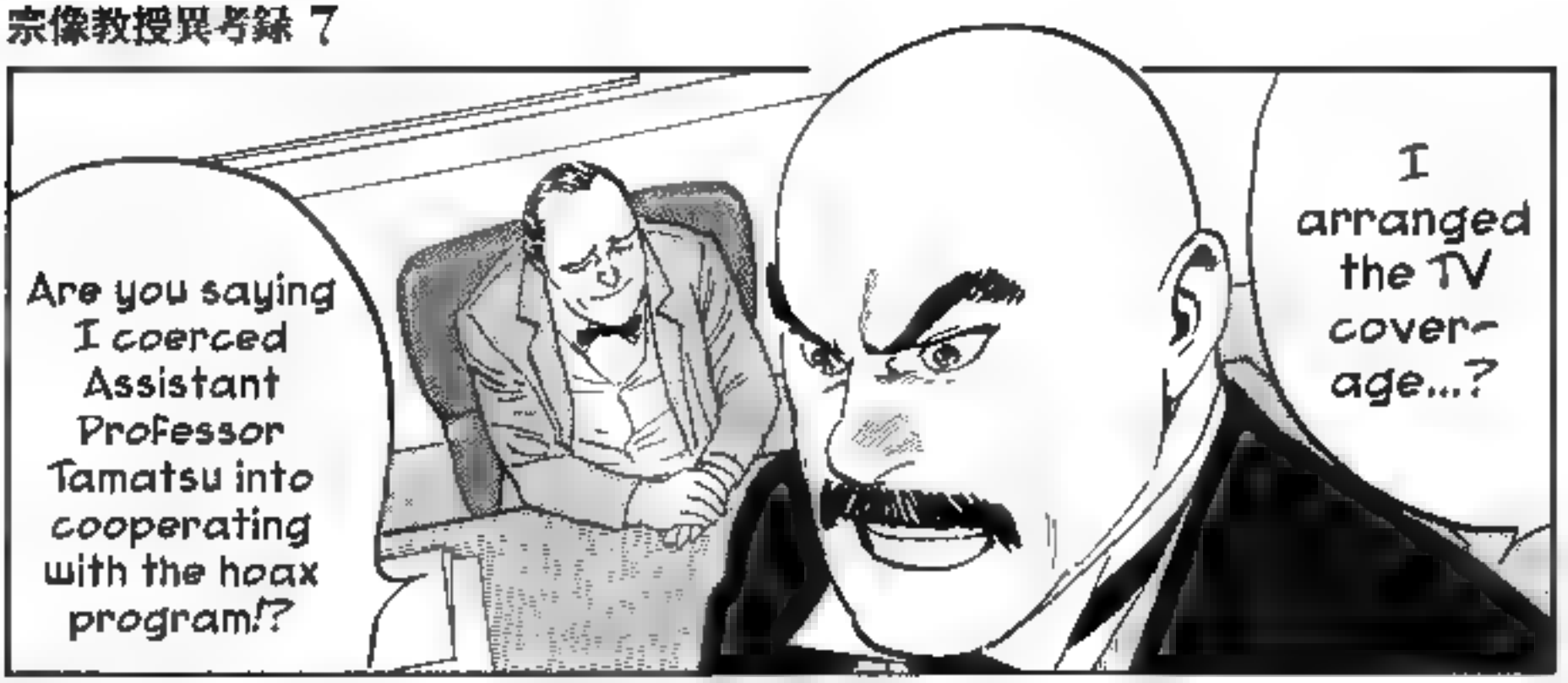
No, if you go back further, our real hometown might be this area between Boso and Tohoku...

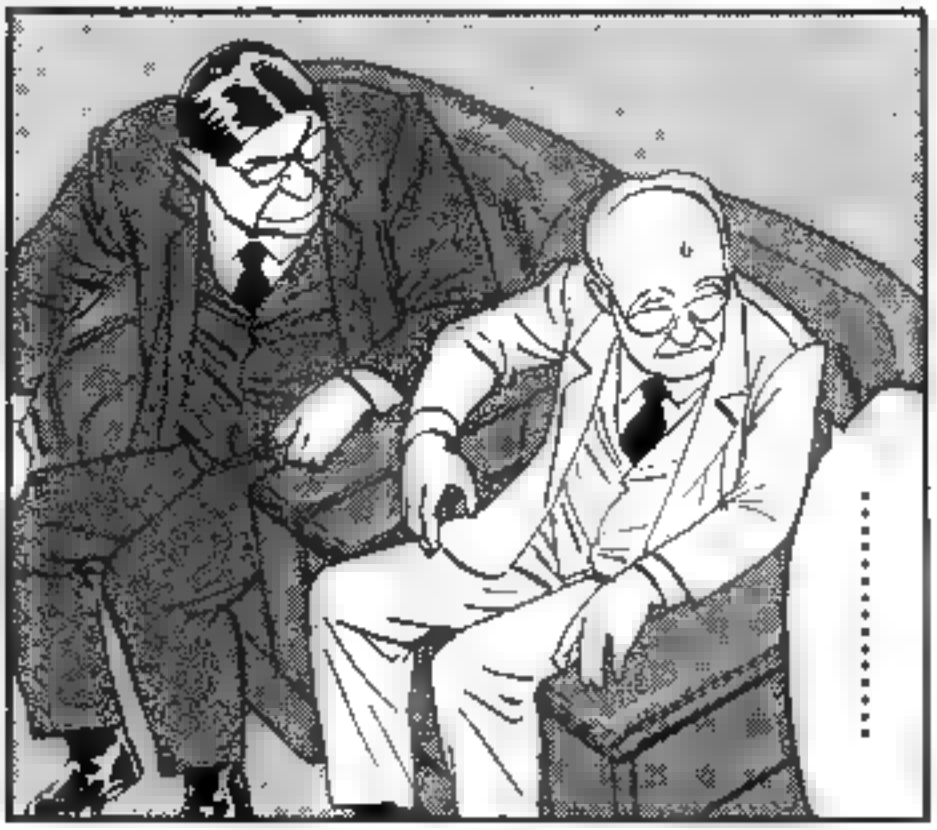
And we've all come back home.



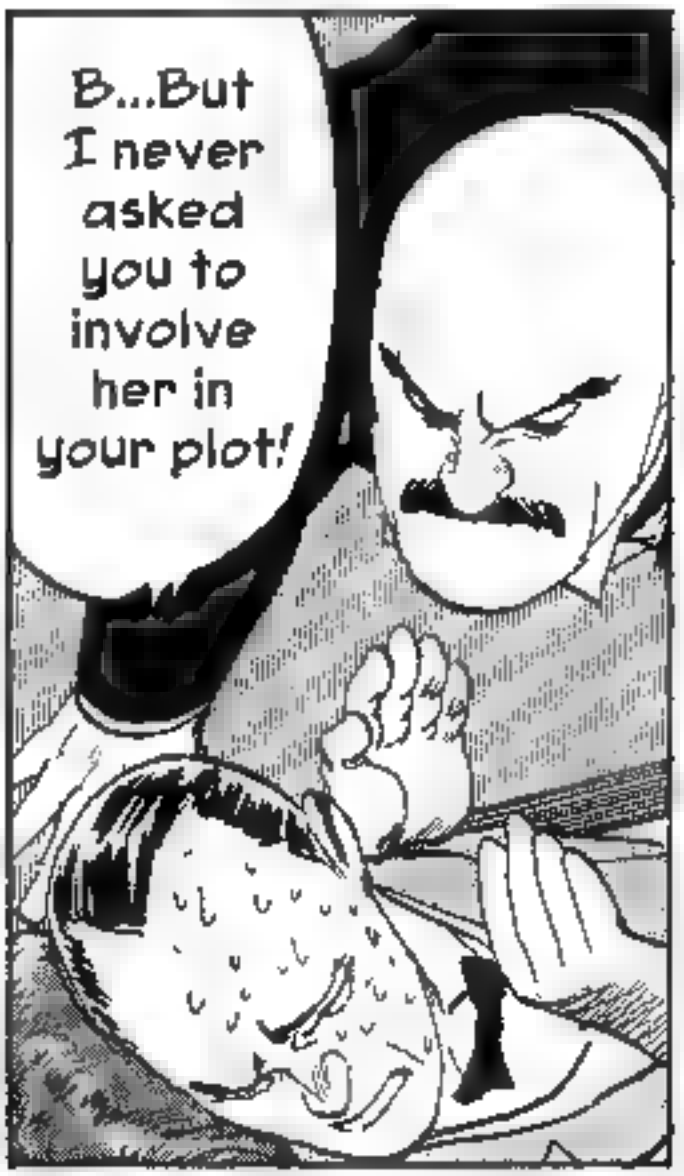
President's Office

Tokyo
East Asia University
of Culture


Are you saying I coerced Assistant Professor Tamatsu into cooperating with the hoax program!?
I arranged the TV cover-age...?



That appears to be what the president and board chairman of Satomi University heard.


B...But I never asked you to involve her in your plot!

You're saying I made the students of Satomi University use fake names to put on a farce tailored after the Hakkenden!?
I did that!?
You're the one who made me meet with the assistant professor, President Ogikayatsu!

She says that you conspired with your acquaintances in the TV staff to force this deal through.

T...The assistant professor is too scared to see you.

THIS IS AN OUTRAGE! LET ME SEE ASSISTANT PROFESSOR TAMATSU!

60

Enough is enough, Muna-kata!

IT'S TRUE THAT I KNOW THEM, BUT WHAT DO YOU MEAN, CON-SPIRED!?

And besides, the TV station has admitted that their coverage was insufficient, and they want to keep it secret!

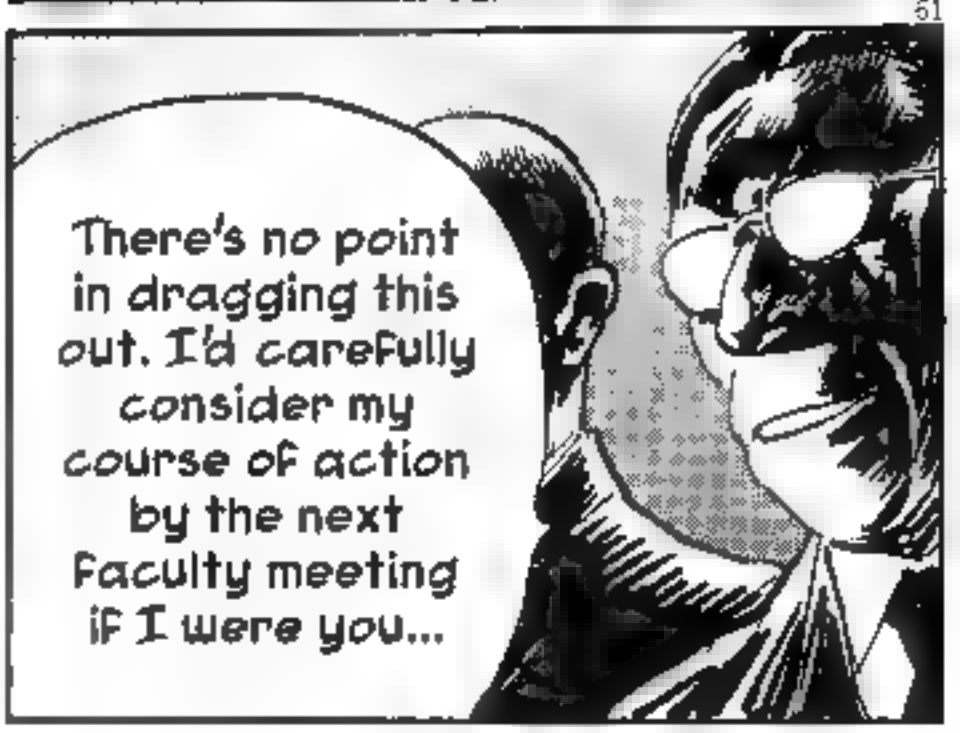
We have witnesses saying you were present during the time they were recording those students!

You've trapped me... But why...?

This is bound to become an issue in the upcoming faculty meeting!
You've demonstrated enough uncooperative behavior as it is, but this infringes upon the university's reputation.

You'd better watch your words! You're only calling your dignity further into question!

51


There's no point in dragging this out. I'd carefully consider my course of action by the next faculty meeting if I were you...

62

Do you think Assistant Professor Tamatsu will show up?

It's worse than that!

President Ogikayatsu is going somewhere! Follow him!

I was hanging around the executive office, and I heard a rumor...

that he might be forced to resign because of us!

YOU'RE KIDDING...!!

We knew it sounded fishy, so we pretended to go along with it while we looked deeper into Assistant Professor Tamatsu, and found a connection between her and the president of the East Asia University of Culture...

But it looks like it's more complicated than we thought!

BUT PROFESSOR MUNAKATA ISN'T AT FAULT HERE! IT WAS ASSISTANT PROFESSOR TAMATSU THAT ORIGINALLY PROPOSED IT TO US!

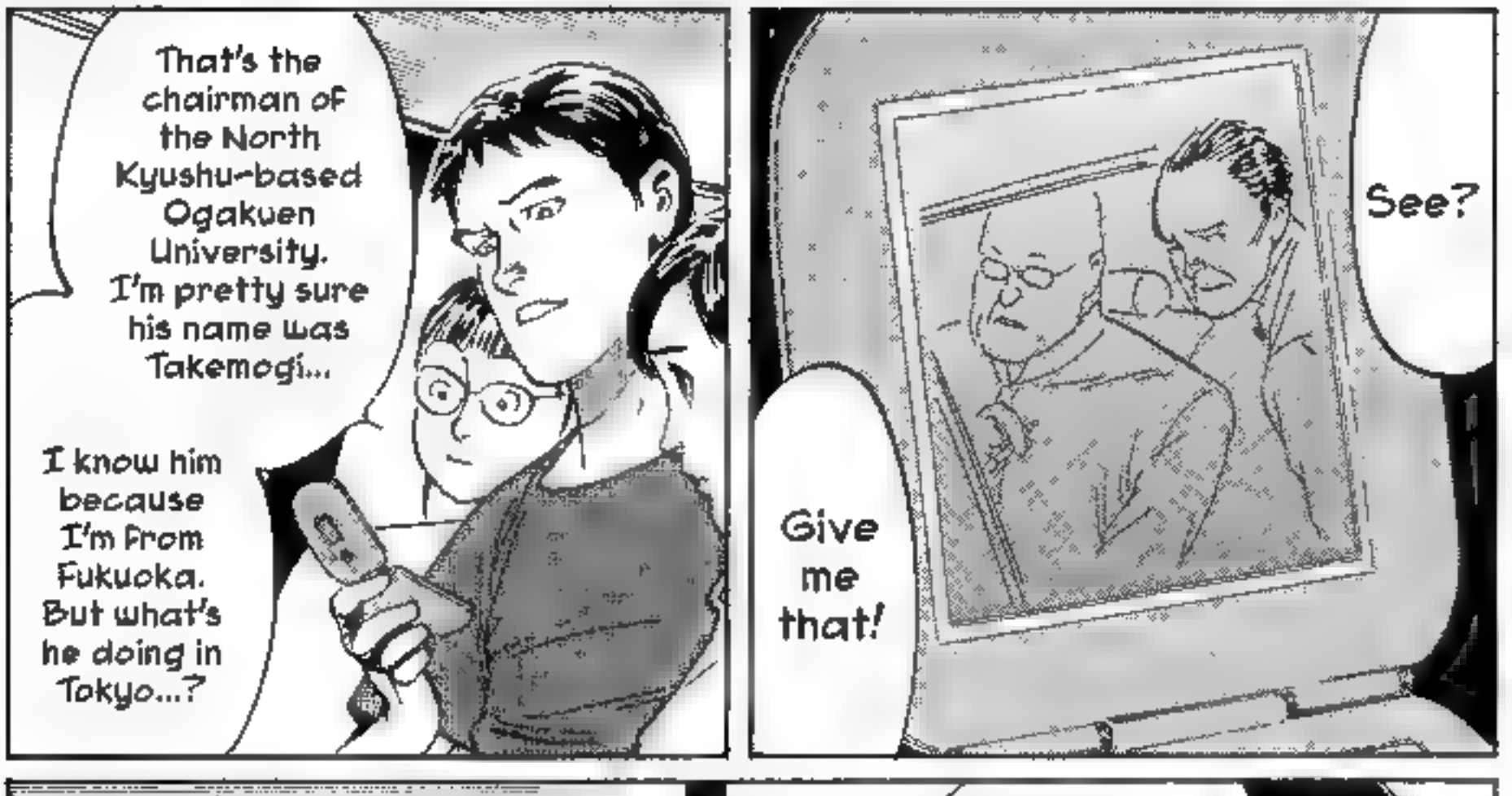
But this all seems a little bit too elaborate for that...

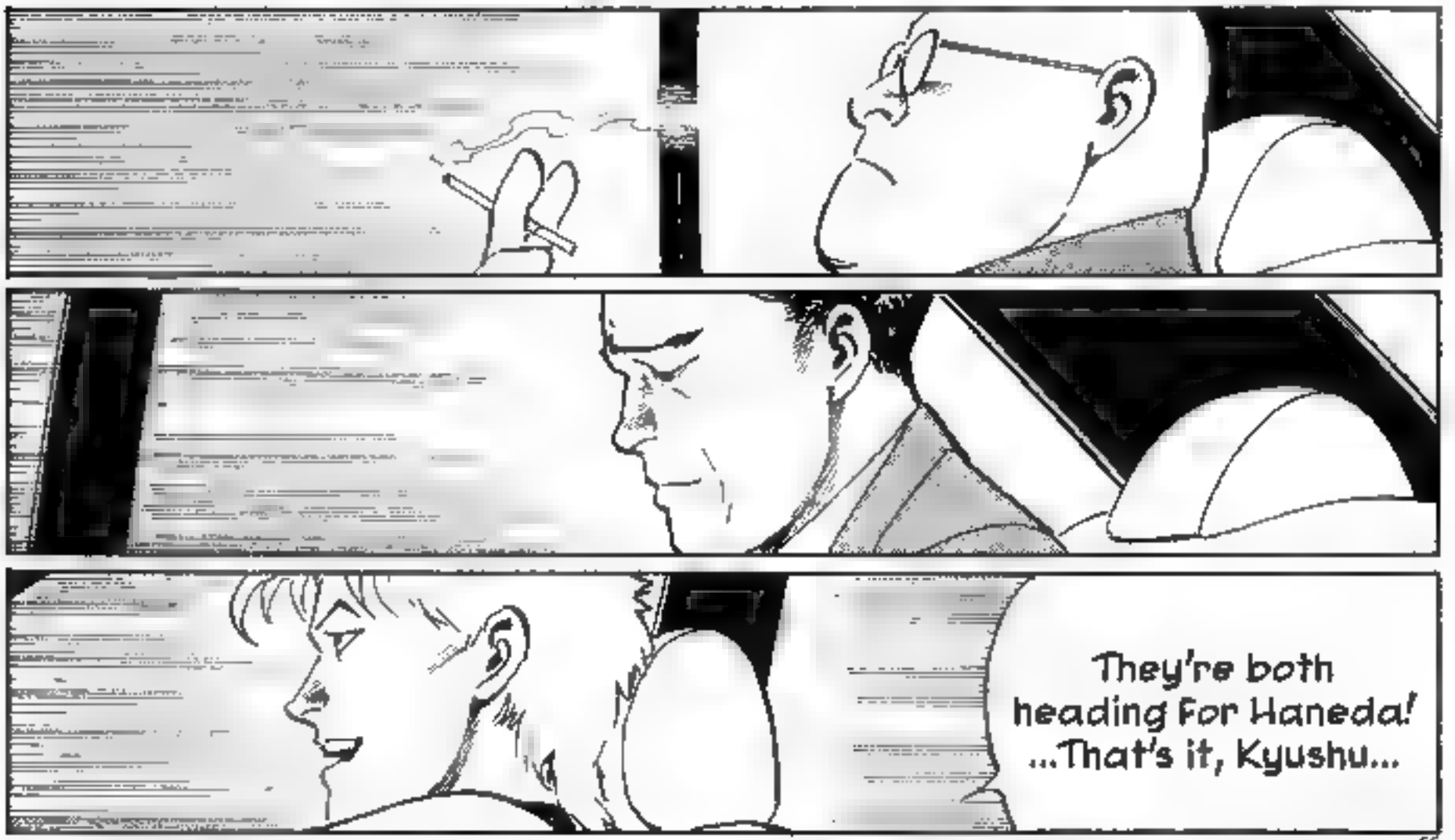
And he used the eight of us for that? You can't be serious!

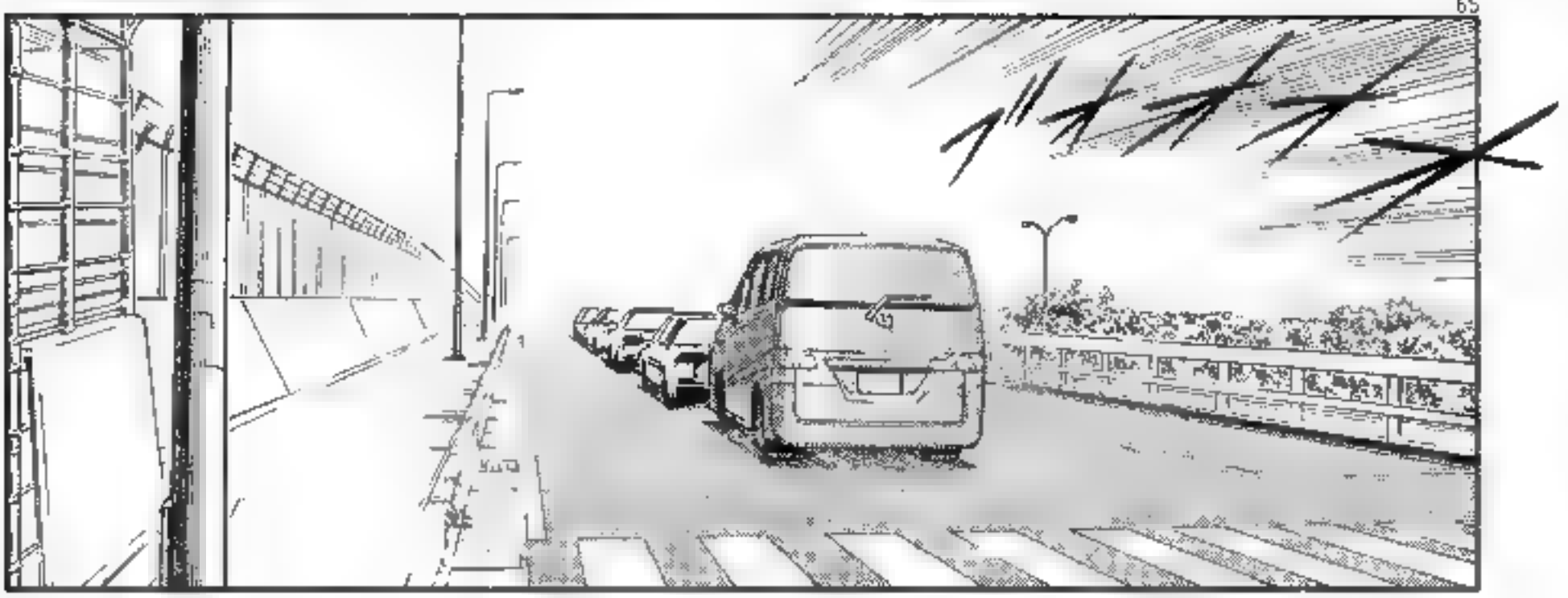
Was ousting Professor Munakata his goal!?

Look at him!

He was talking with President Ogikayatsu in the East Asia University of Culture parking lot...


That's the chairman of the North Kyushu-based Ogakuen University. I'm pretty sure his name was Takemogi...
I know him because I'm from Fukuoka. But what's he doing in Tokyo...?
See?
Give me that!


They're both heading for Haneda! ...That's it, Kyushu...



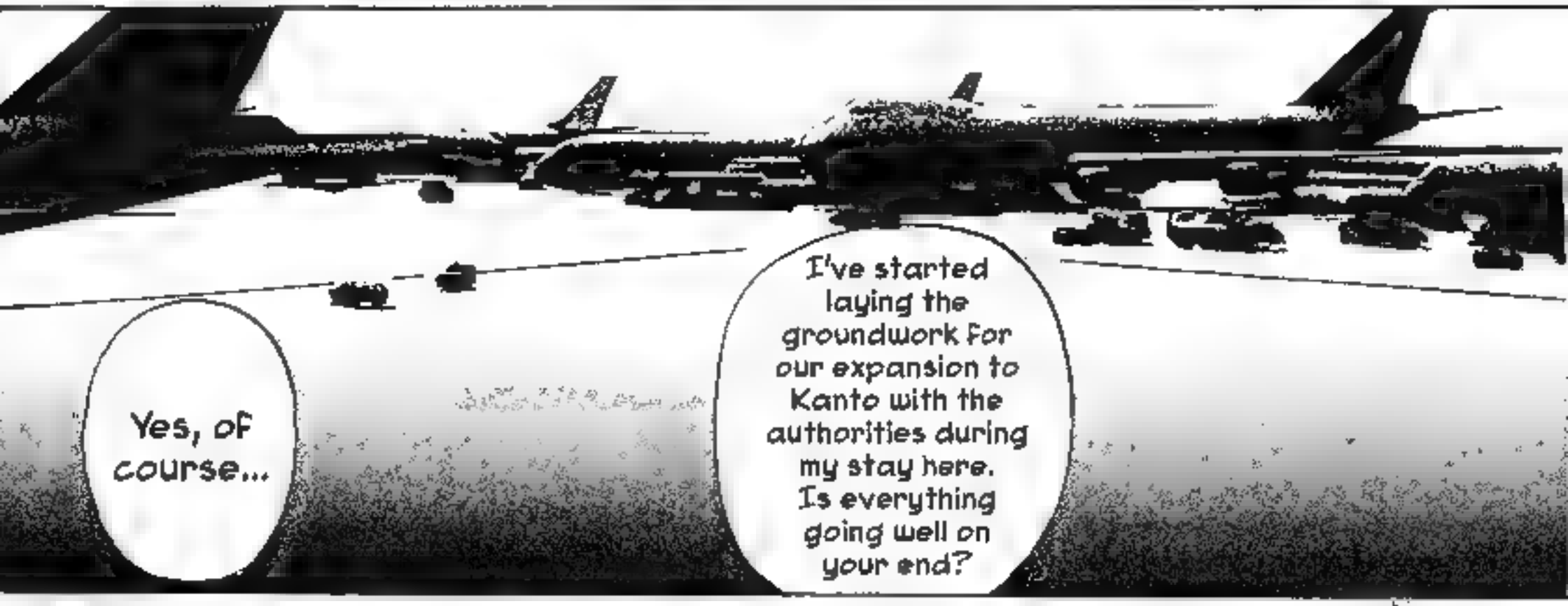
Haneda Airport

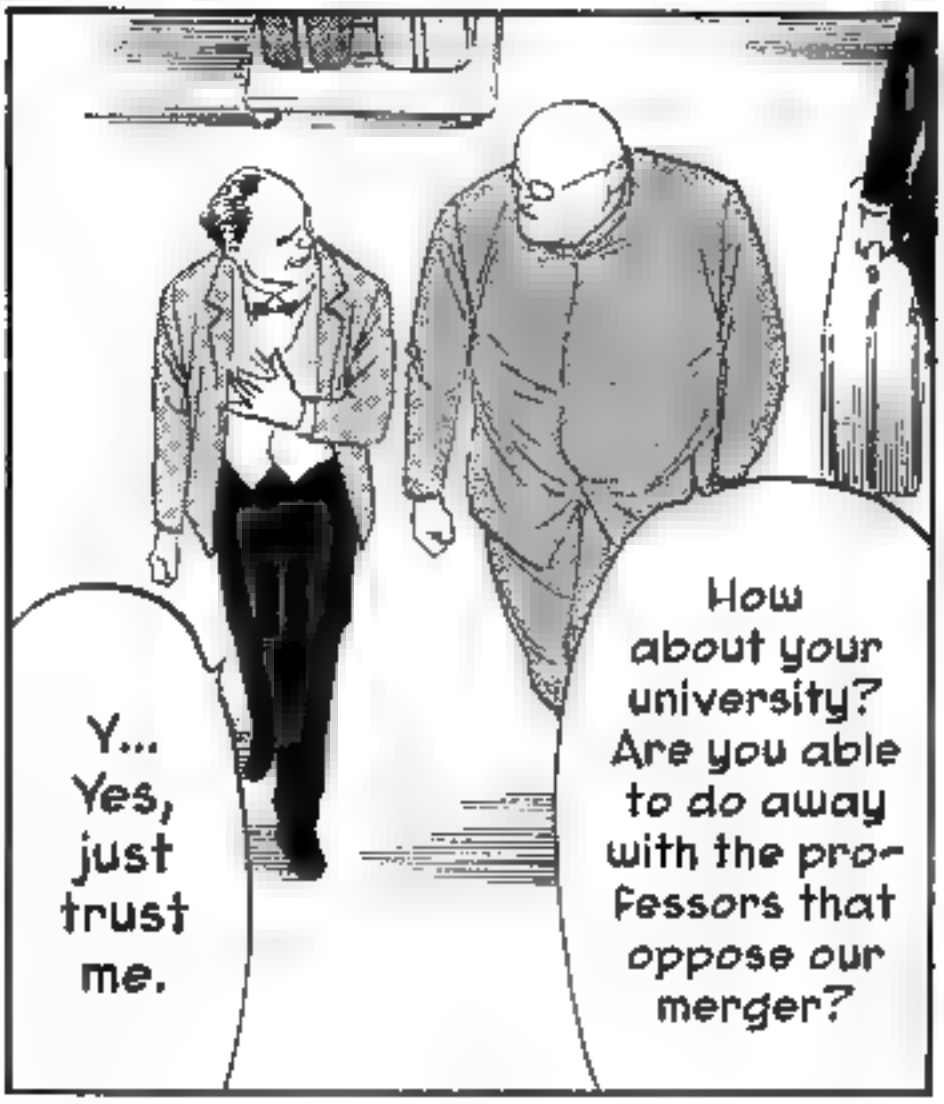
Well, if it isn't Mr. Ogikayatsu! Are you here to see me off?

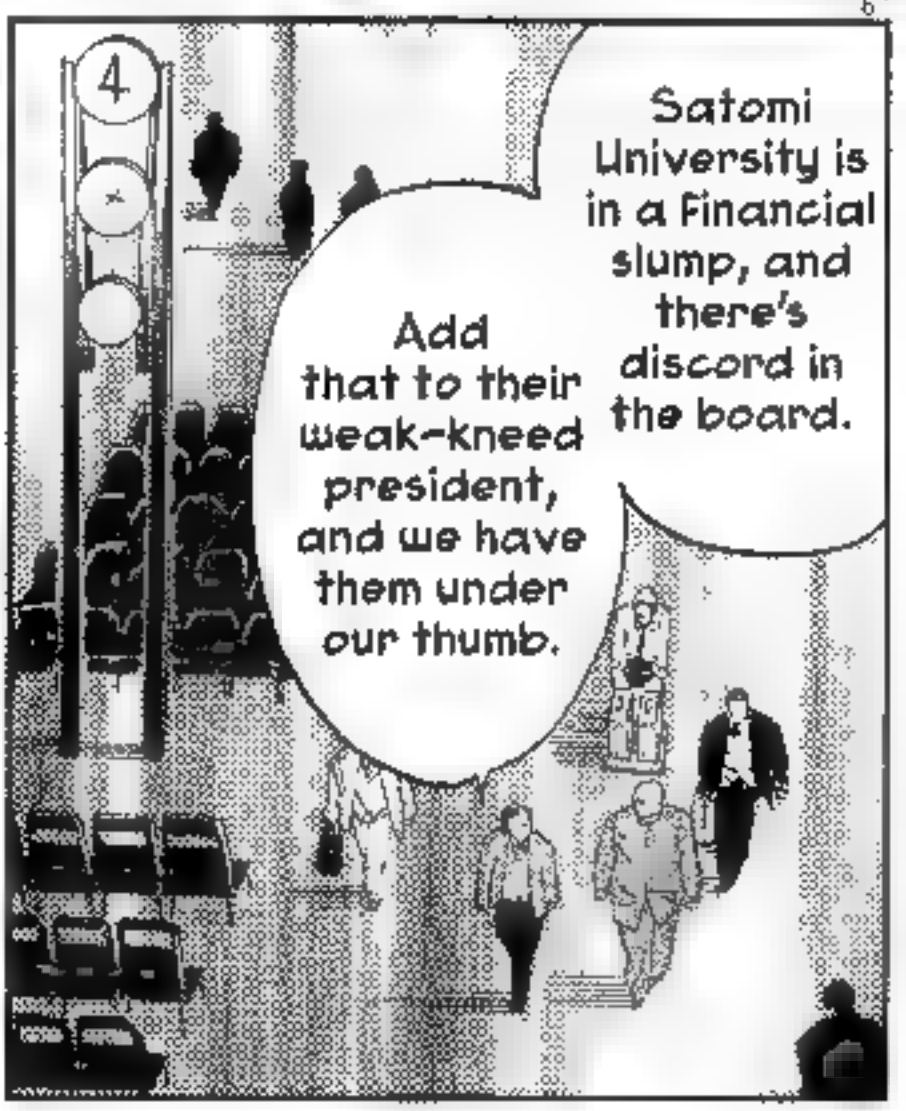
I'll be back soon.

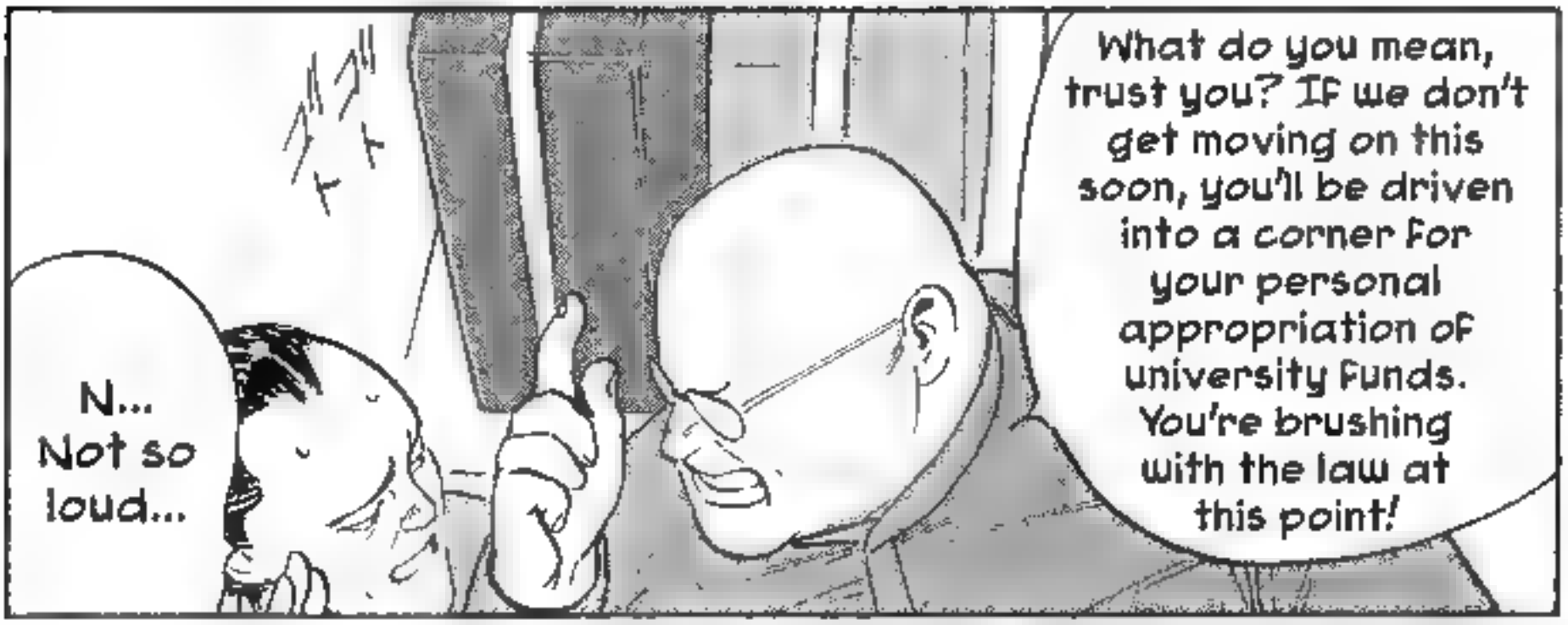
Going back to Kyushu, Mr. Take-mogi?

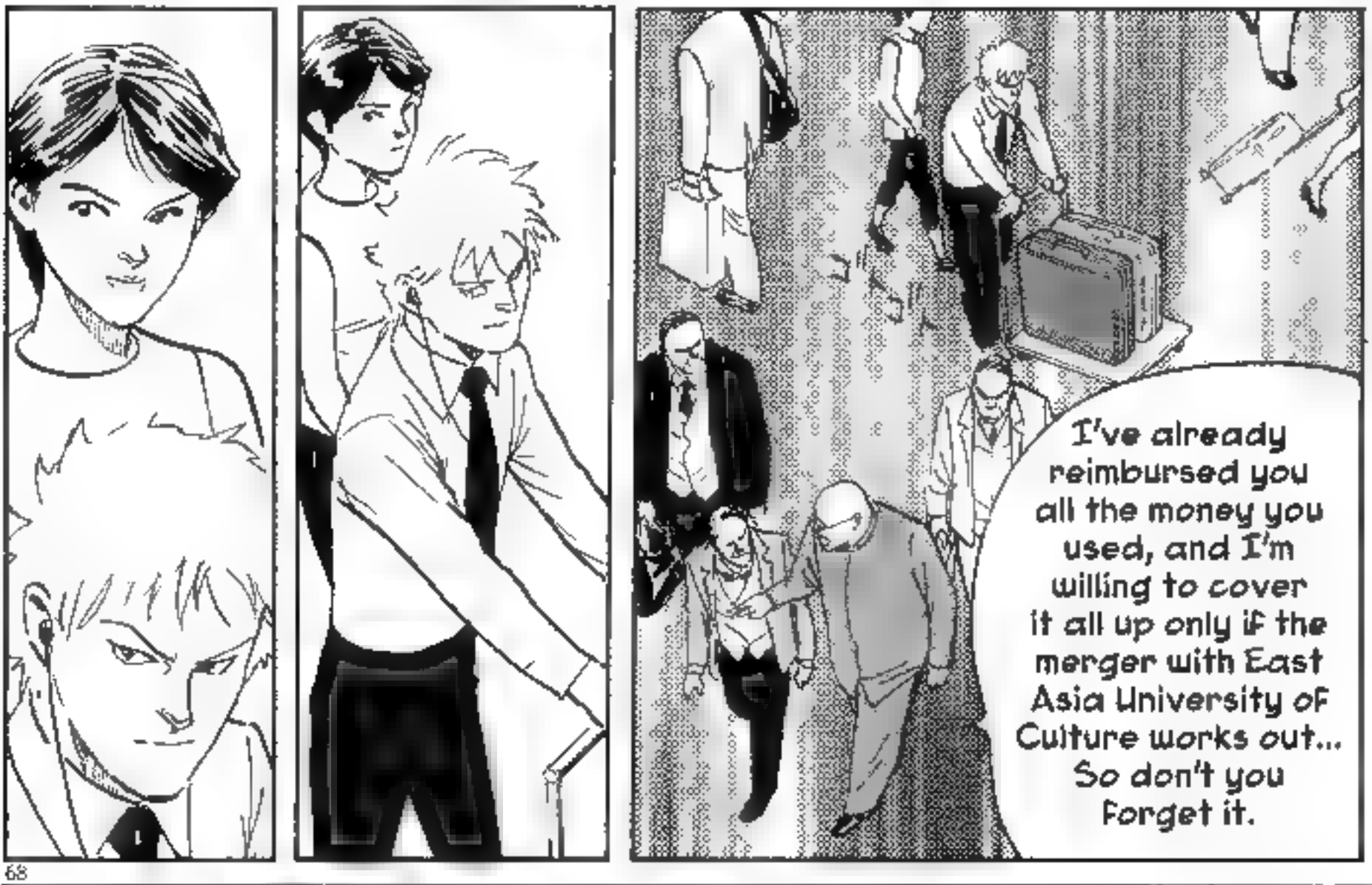
カチッ

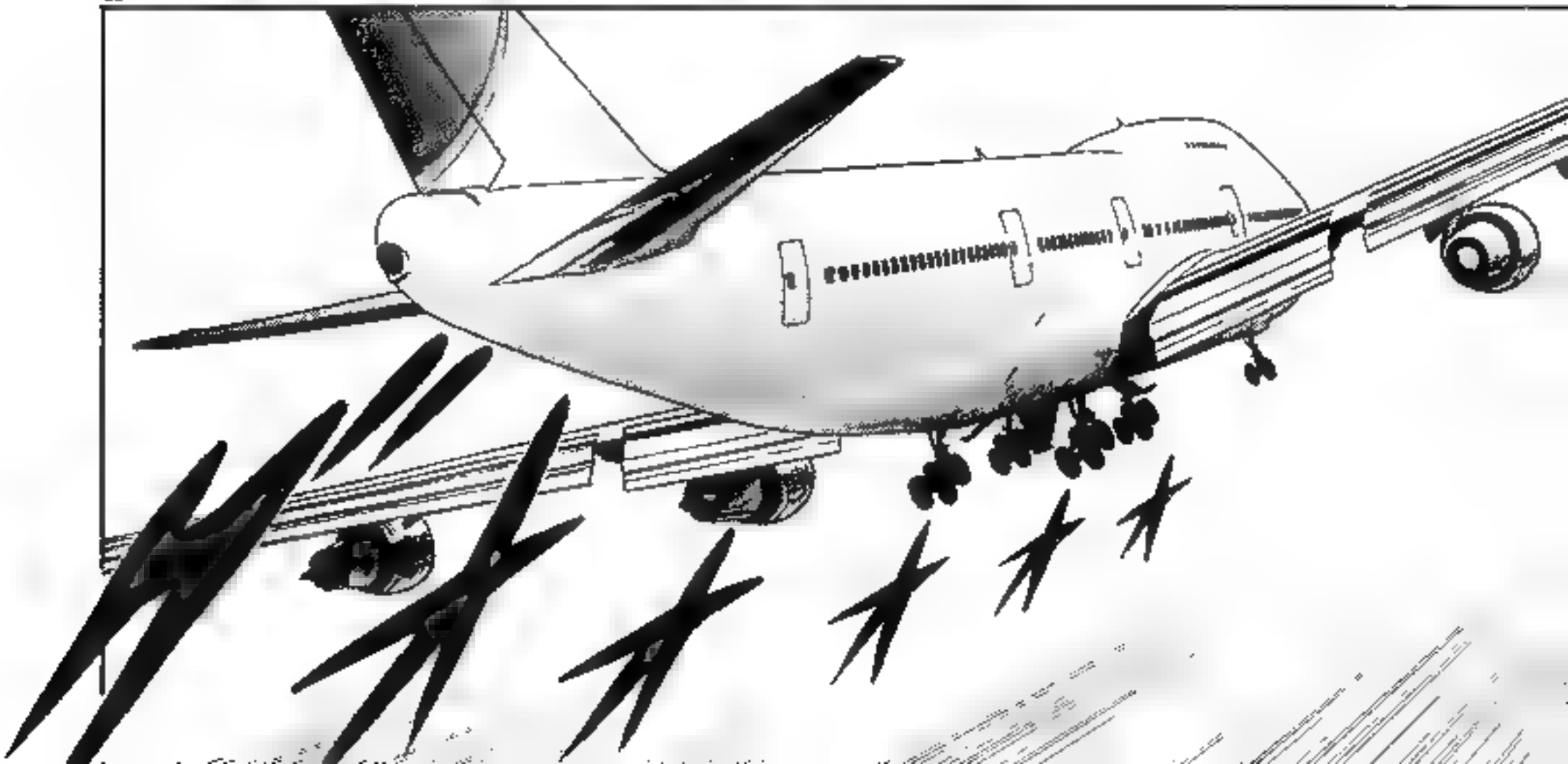

Yes, of course...
I've started laying the groundwork for our expansion to Kanto with the authorities during my stay here. Is everything going well on your end?

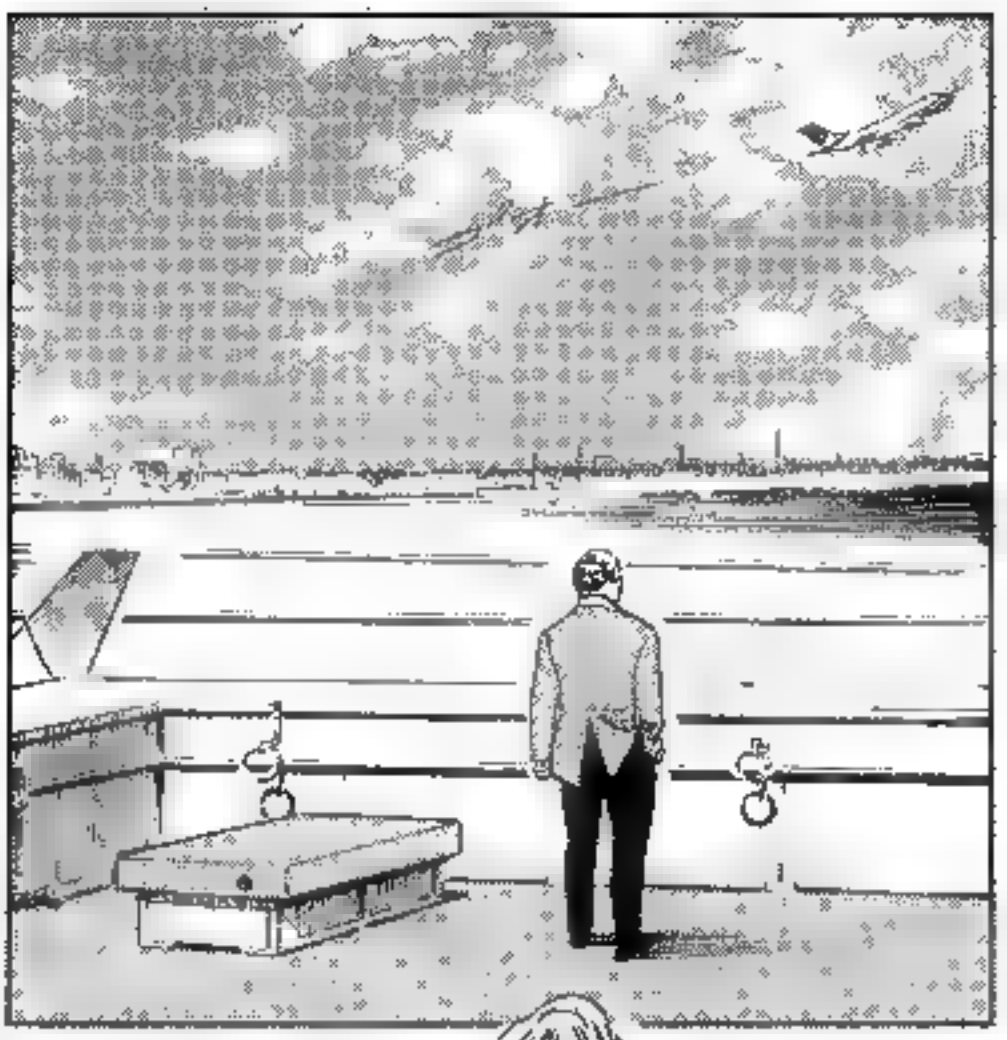

Y... Yes, just trust me.
How about your university? Are you able to do away with the professors that oppose our merger?


4
Satomi University is in a financial slump, and there's discord in the board.
Add that to their weak-kneed president, and we have them under our thumb.


What do you mean, trust you? If we don't get moving on this soon, you'll be driven into a corner for your personal appropriation of university funds. You're brushing with the law at this point!
N... Not so loud...


I've already reimbursed you all the money you used, and I'm willing to cover it all up only if the merger with East Asia University of Culture works out... So don't you forget it.





If this keeps up, our university will be taken over, and Professor Munakata will lose his professorship...!!

Looks like the rumors of their affair are true. It's all coming together now.

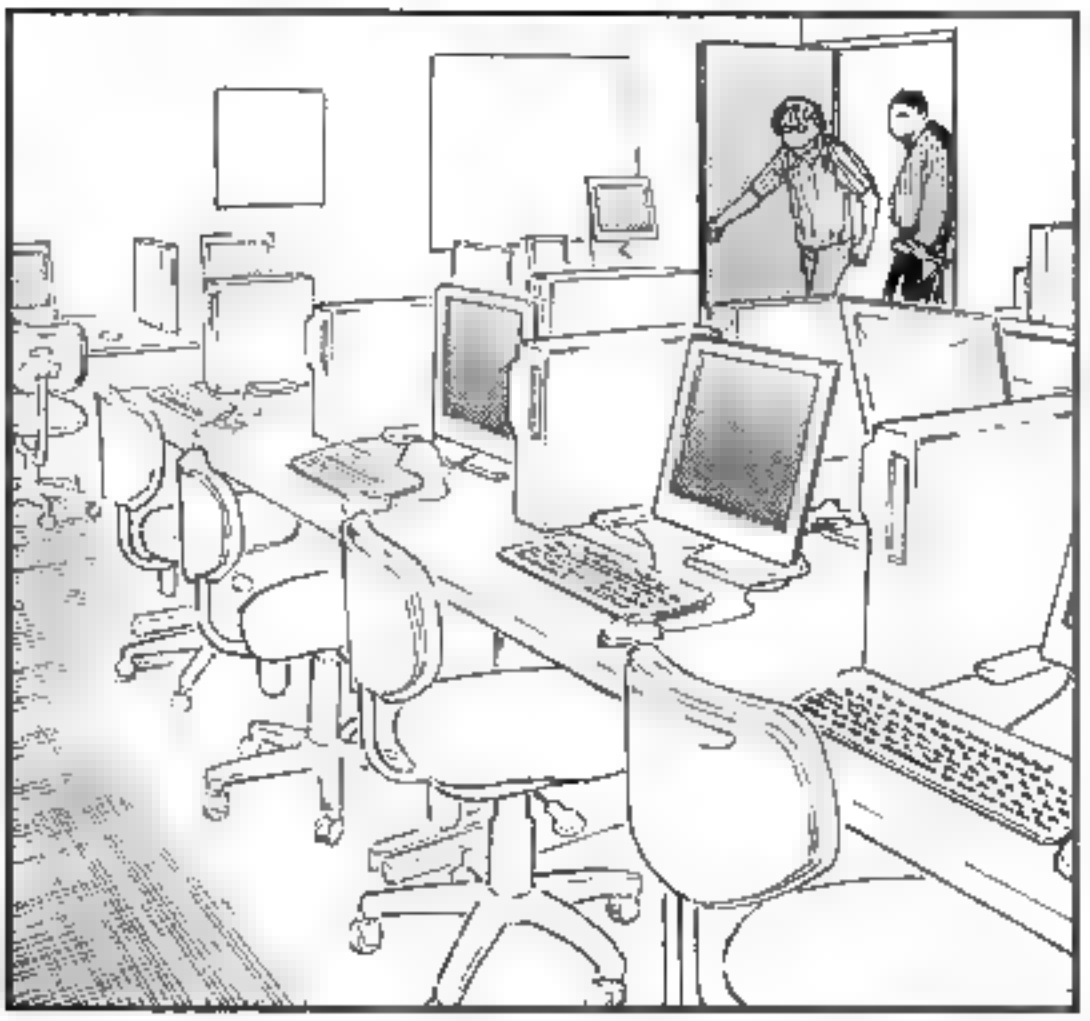
I'll bet they're heading straight for a hot spring. No wonder he'd want to embezzle money

KEEEEEEEEEH!

EEEIIIII!

Say what?

Alright... Let's give it a try.

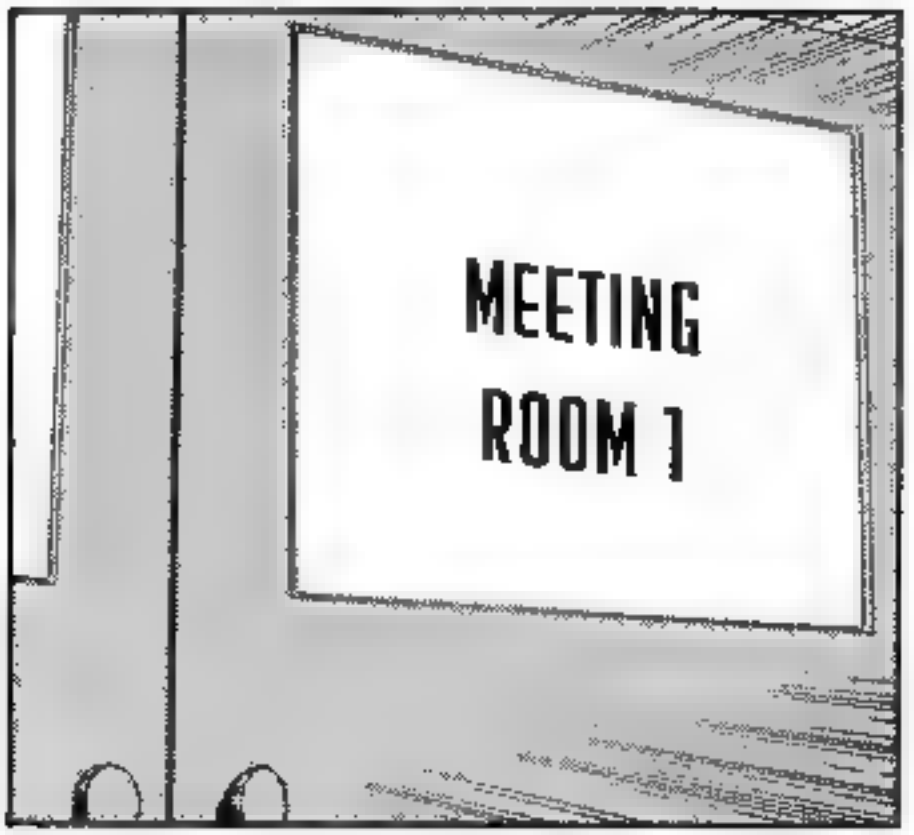


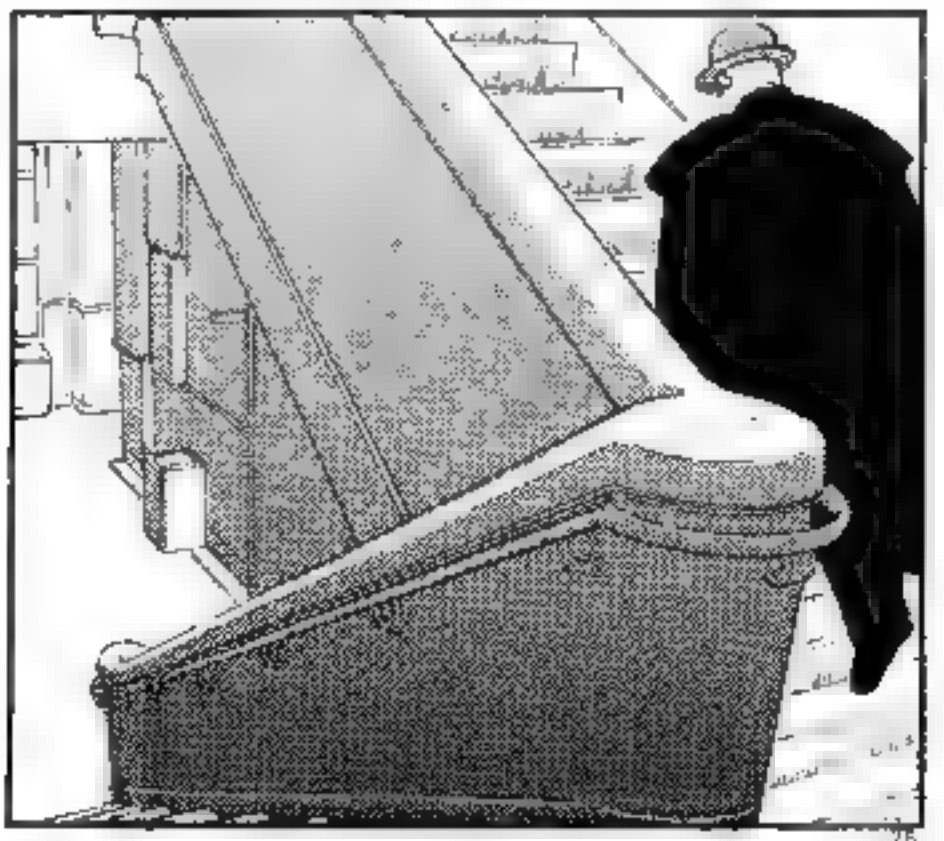
Huh?
We're gonna stop the invasion from Kyushu.

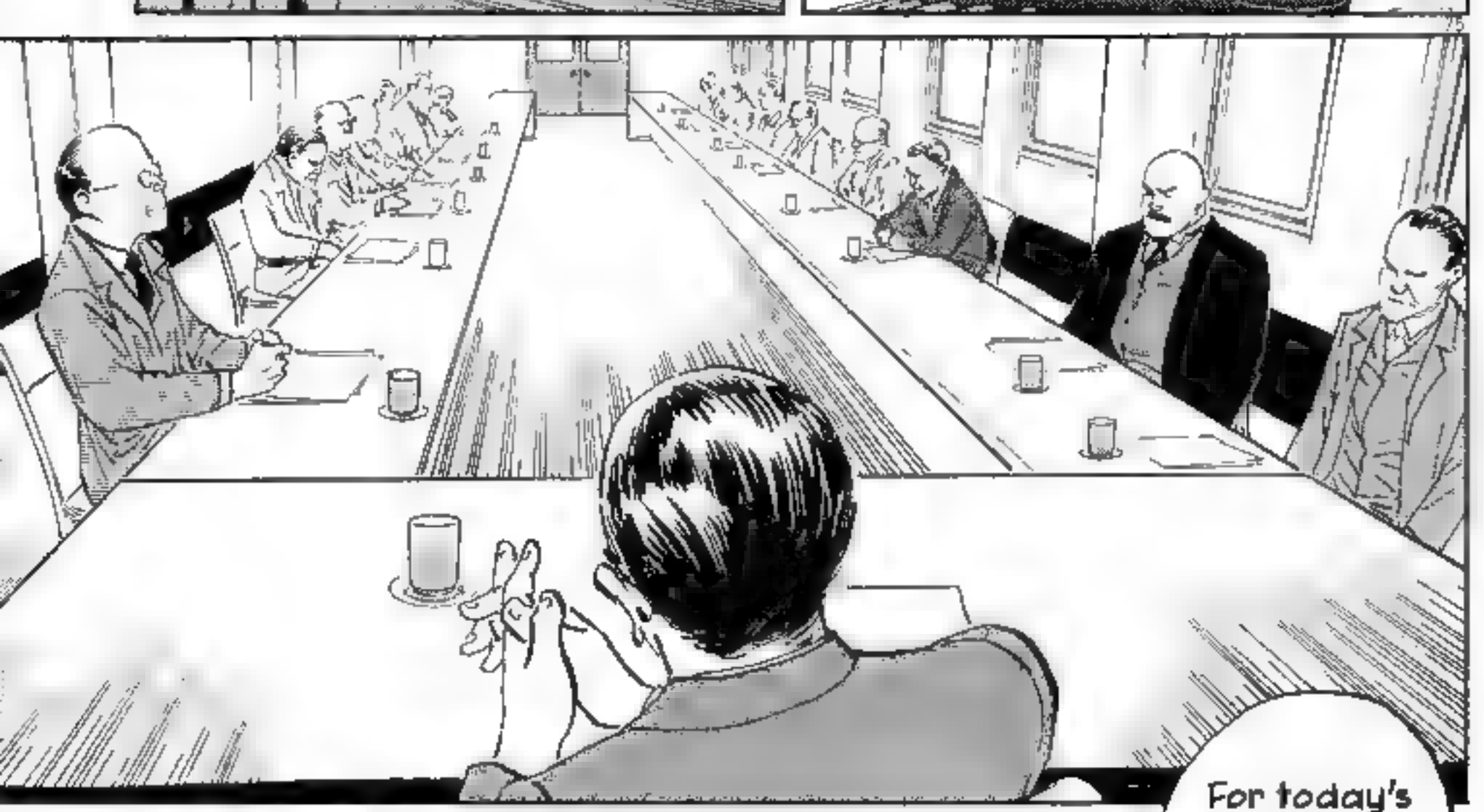
71

I'll bypass the security, and hack into the East Asia University of Culture's accounts!
CRACK CRACK

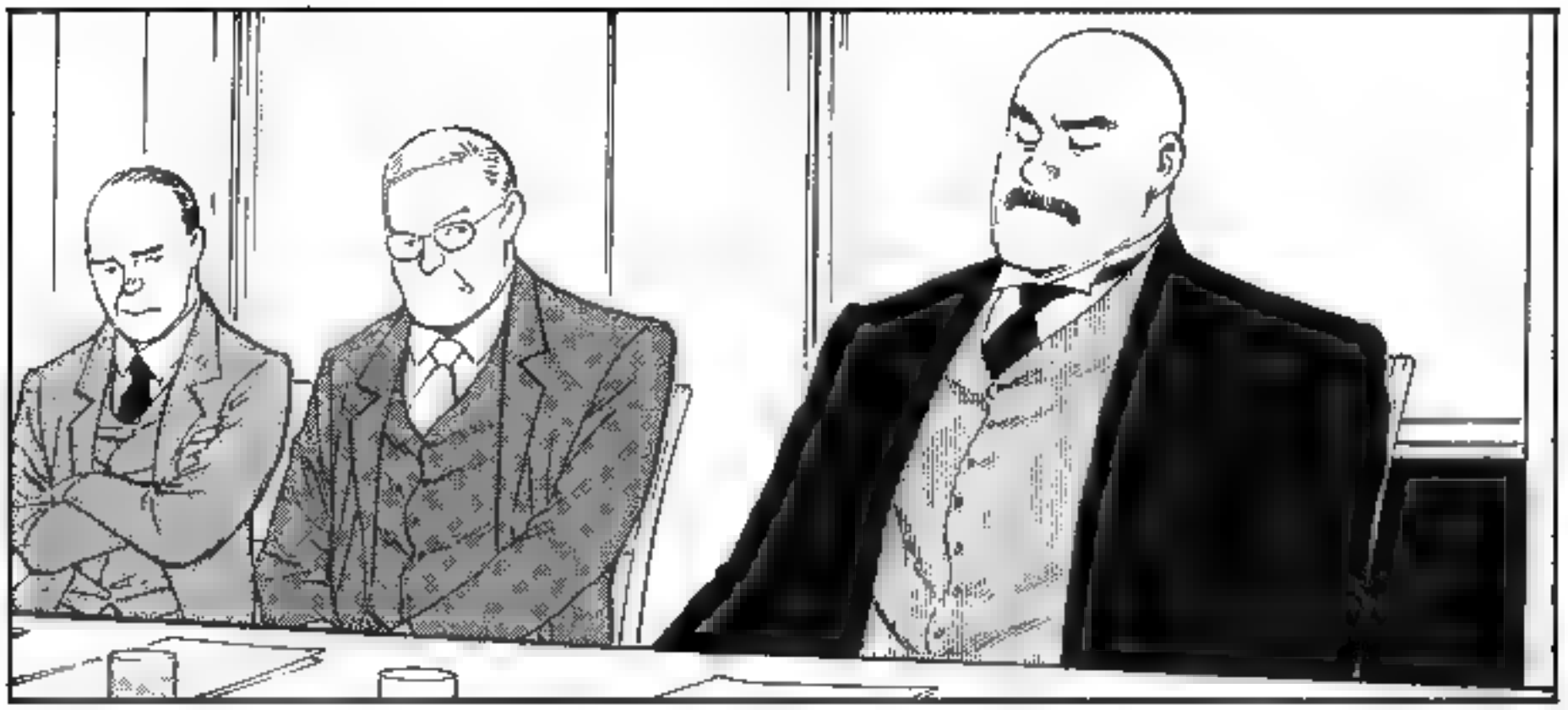
Two weeks later...
East Asia University of Culture
Administrative Building
74
Executive Office

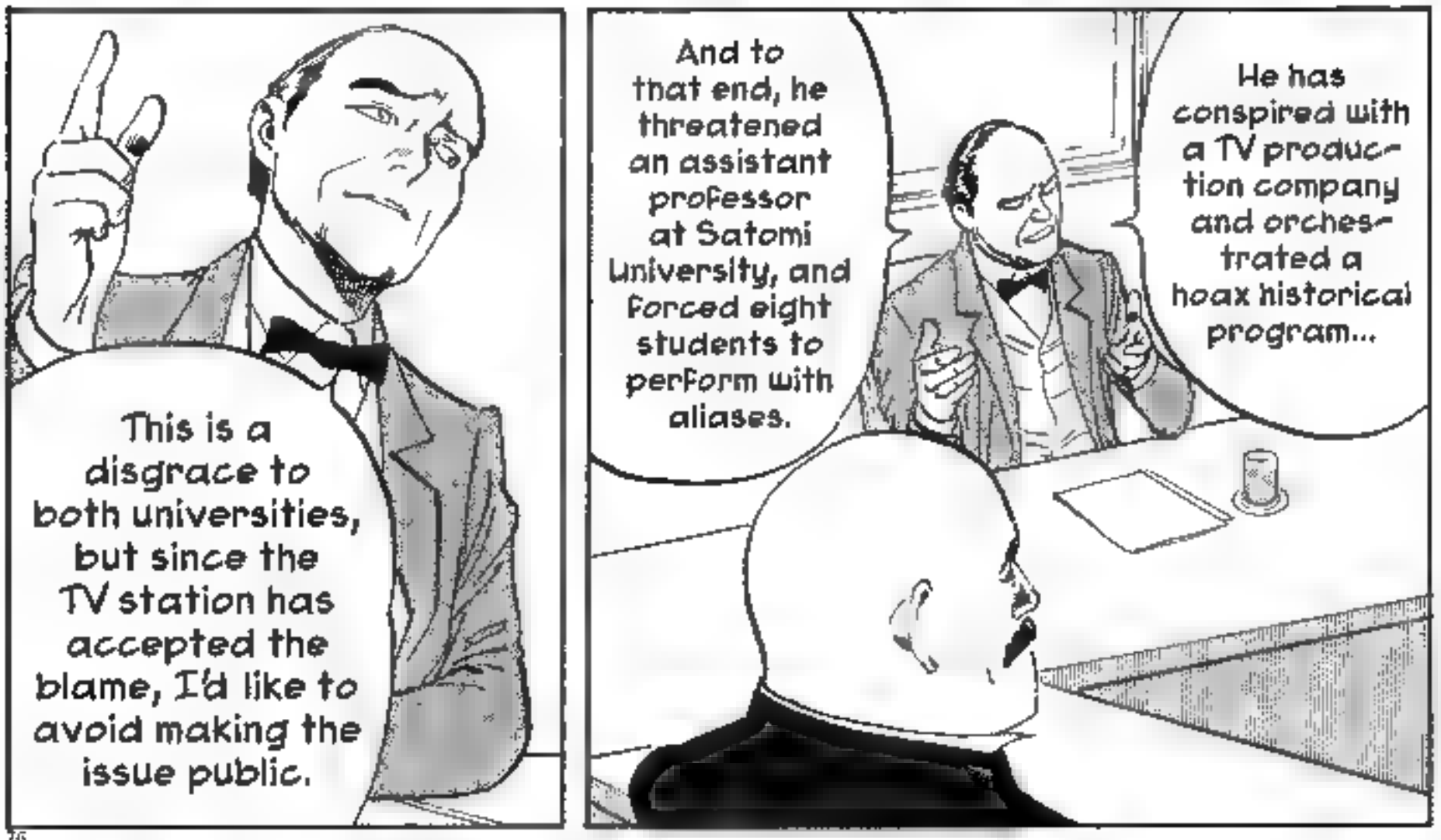

MEETING
ROOM 1



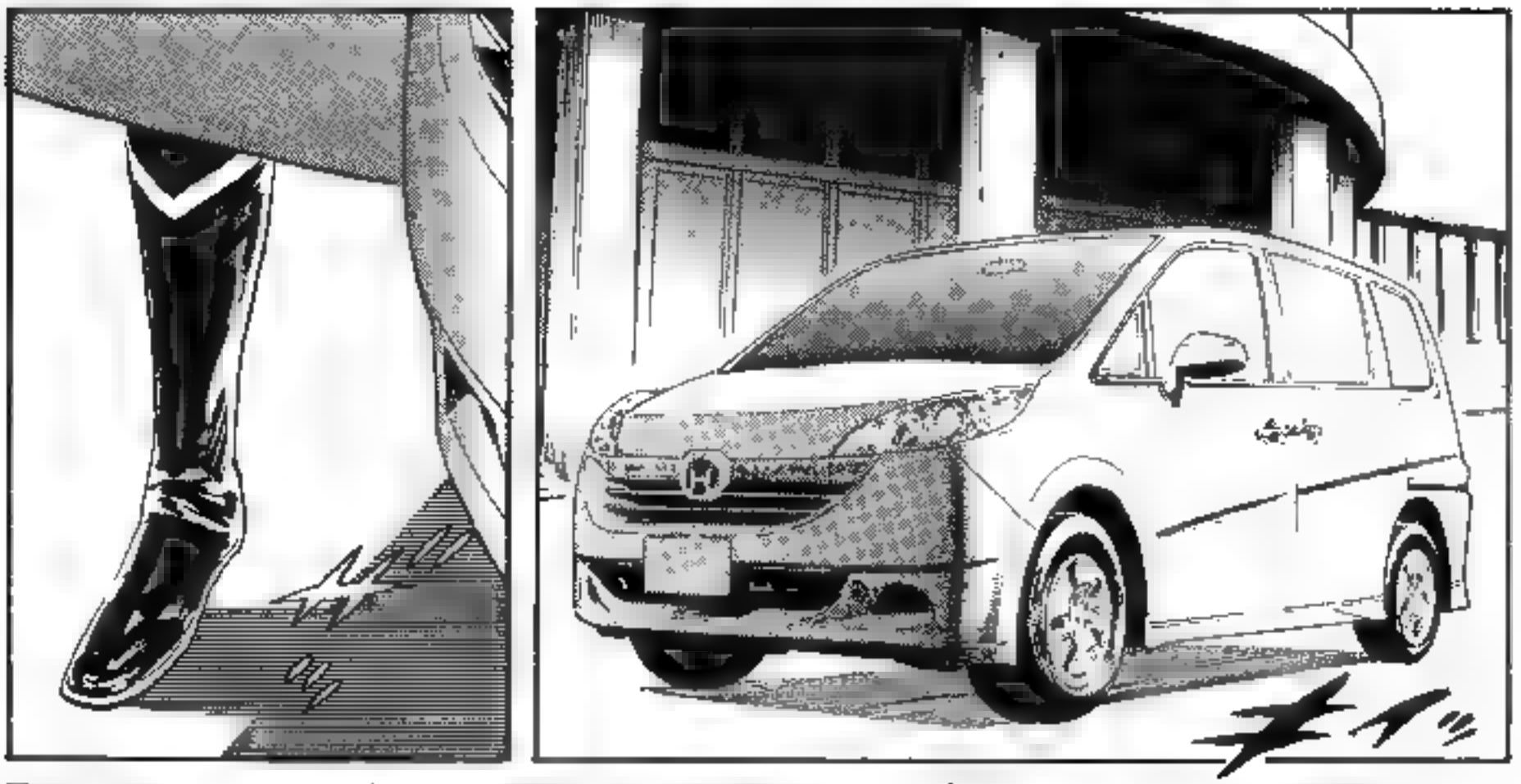


We need to address the problem of Professor Munakata of folkloristics.
But first ...
For today's faculty meeting, I'd like to discuss an alliance or merger with Ogakuen University...




This is a disgrace to both universities, but since the TV station has accepted the blame, I'd like to avoid making the issue public.
And to that end, he threatened an assistant professor at Satomi University, and forced eight students to perform with aliases.
He has conspired with a TV production company and orchestrated a hoax historical program...

I agree. What's done is done. It would be best for him and the university to take the blame graciously.
I think it would be best for Munakata to accept a voluntary resignation.



Sorry. We're practicing our cosplay show for the school festival.
Hey, what's with the outfits?

Ahhh. Well, best of luck.

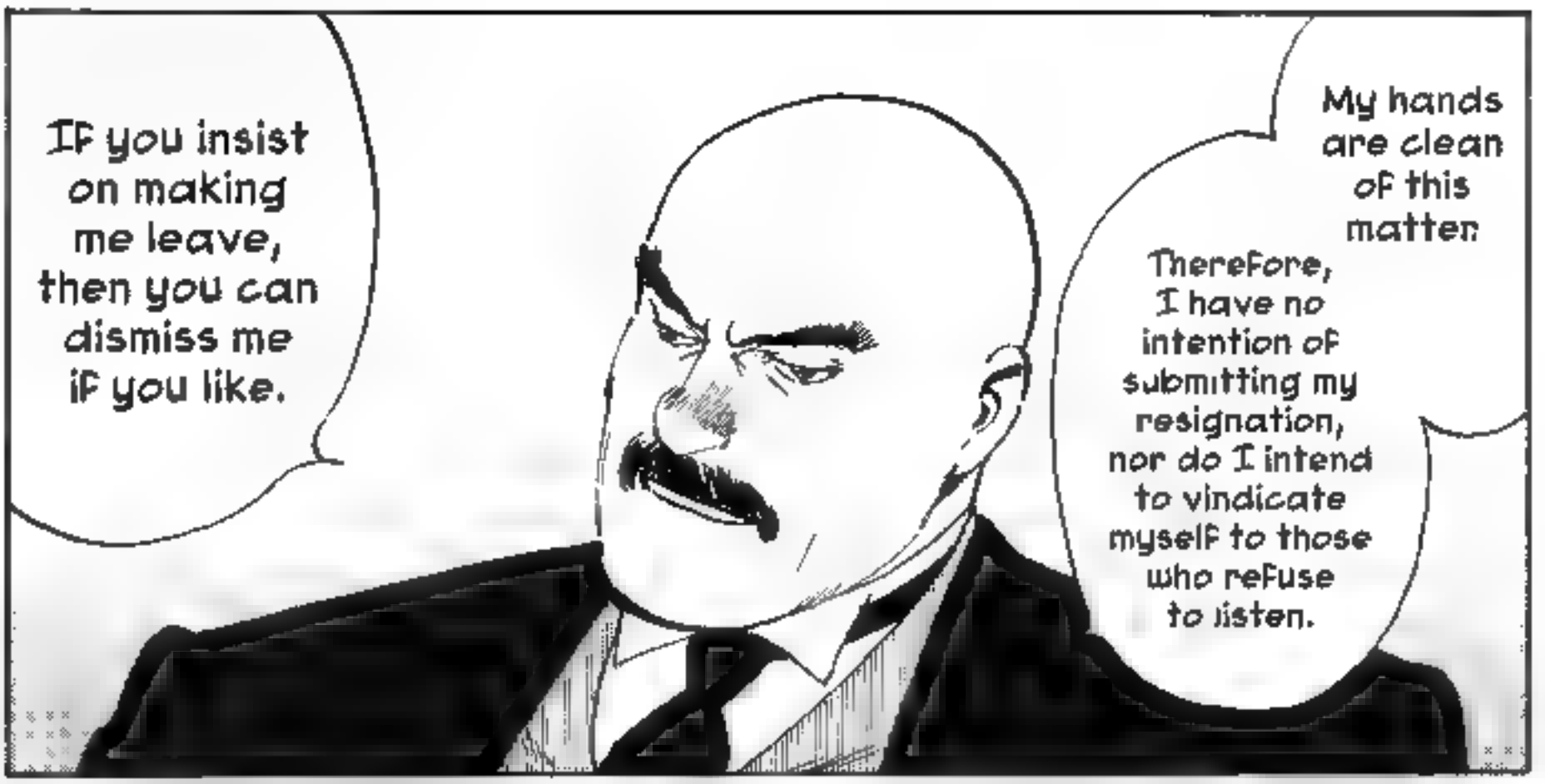
We don't want to get rough, so everyone get into the next room over!

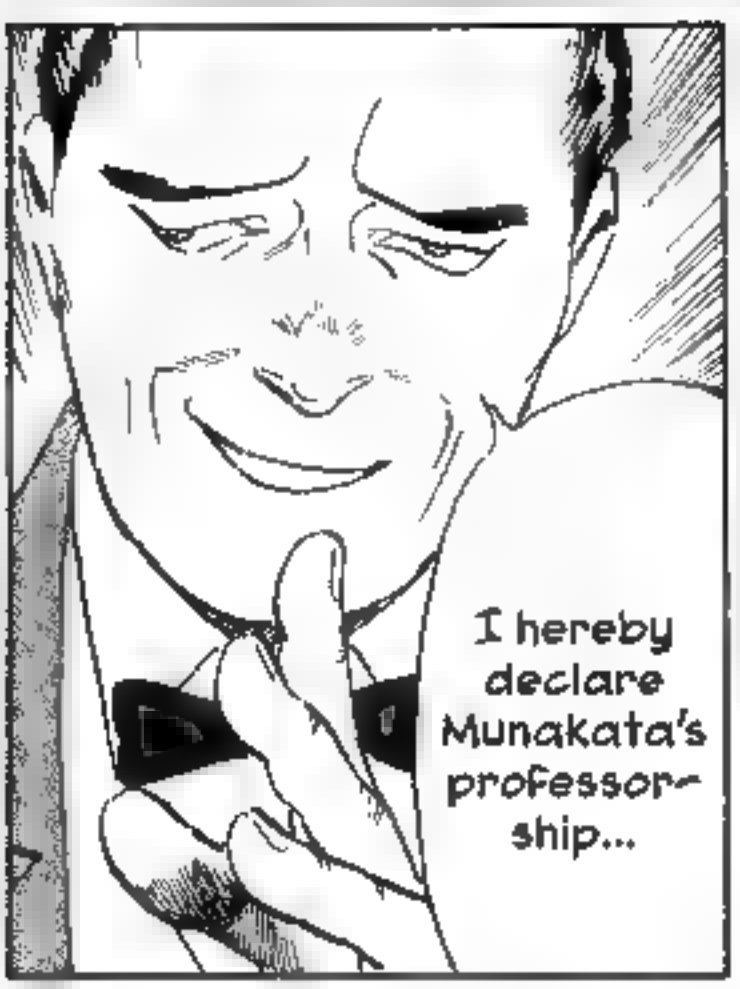
EEP ...

WE'LL HOLD ONTO YOUR KEYS AND CELL PHONES, TOO! NOW, HURRY!!

Al-right, then...

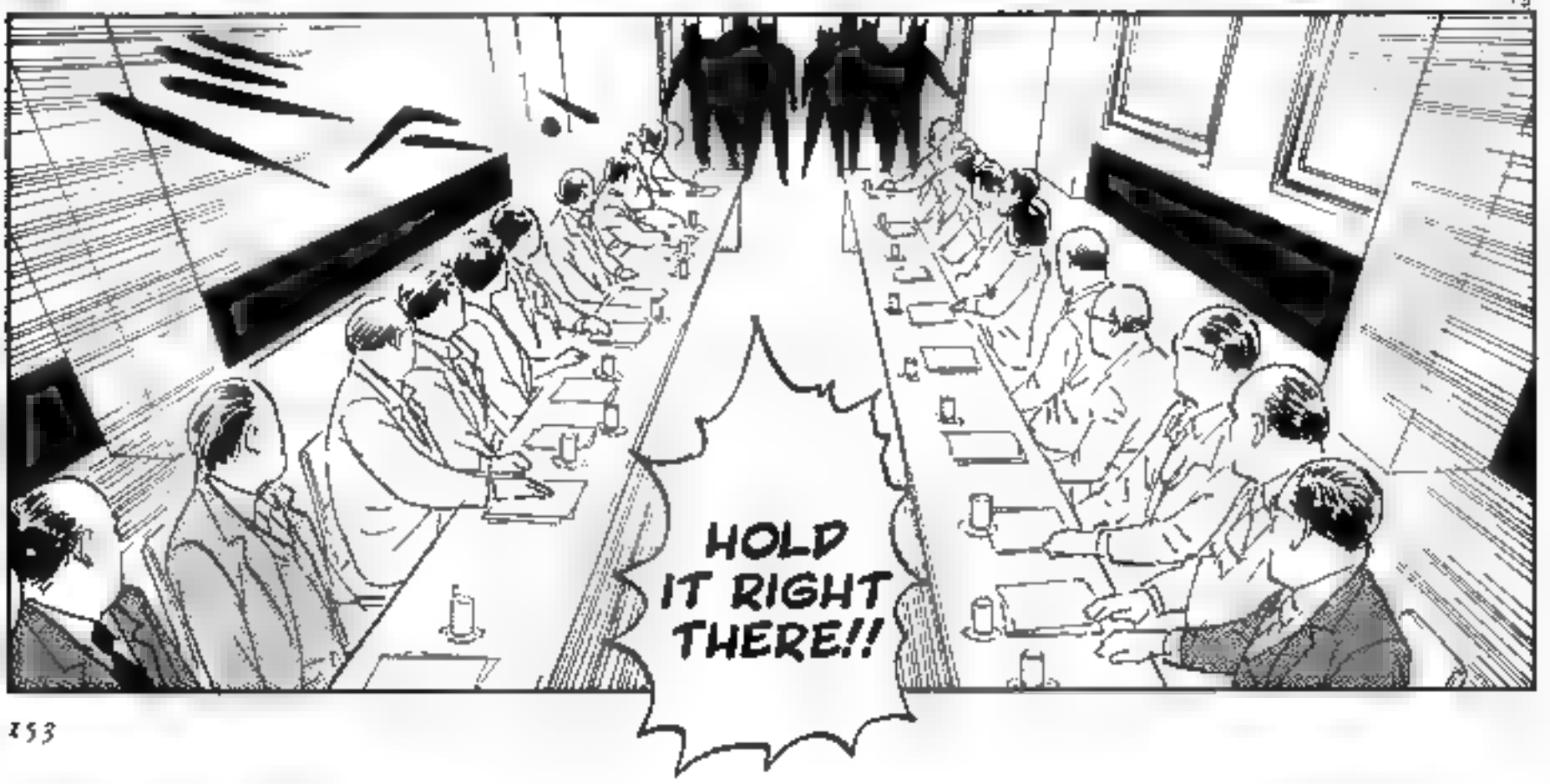
CRACK CRACK


If you insist on making me leave, then you can dismiss me if you like.
My hands are clean of this matter
Therefore, I have no intention of submitting my resignation, nor do I intend to vindicate myself to those who refuse to listen.


I hereby declare Munakata's professor-ship...

I see. Then you leave us no choice...

79


HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!!

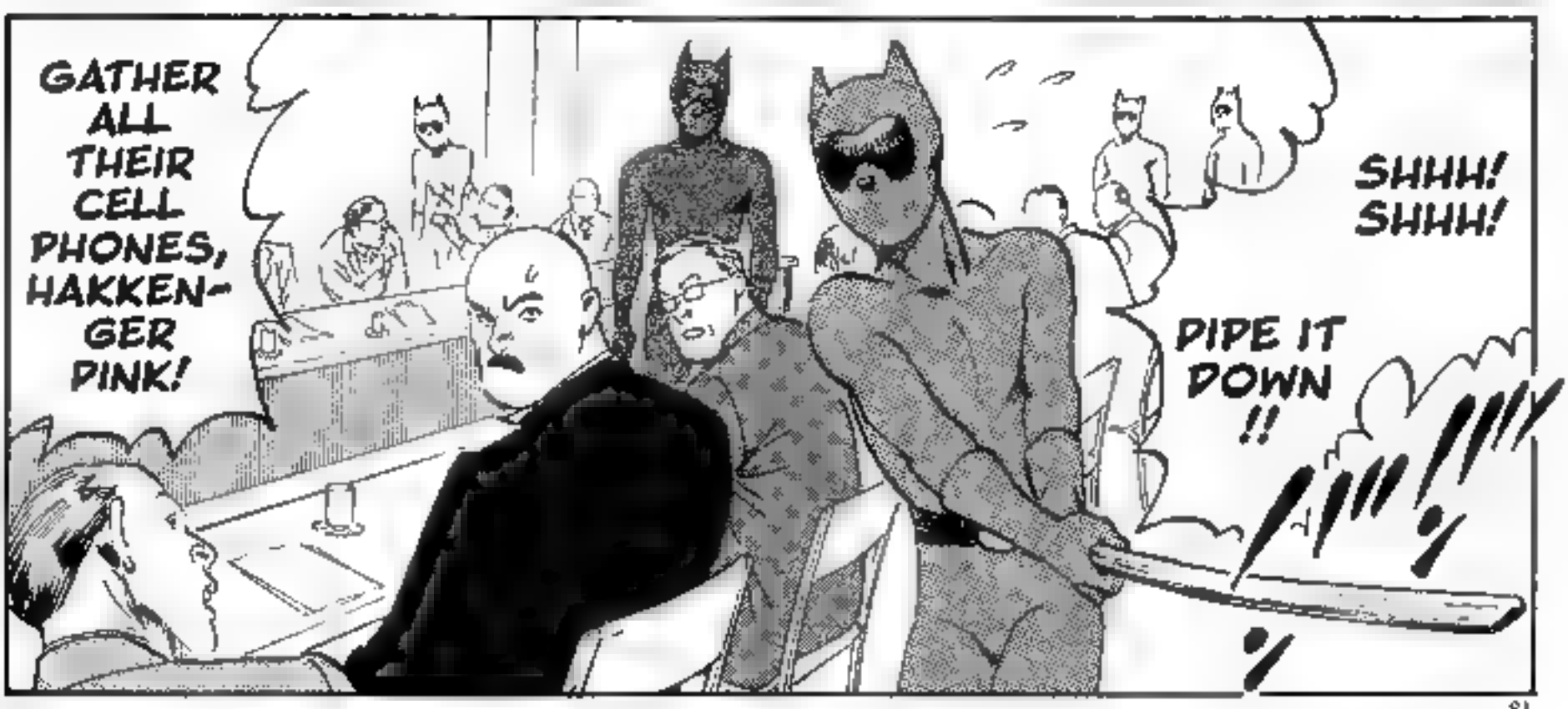
THE HAKKENGERS ARE ON THE SCENE!!

.....

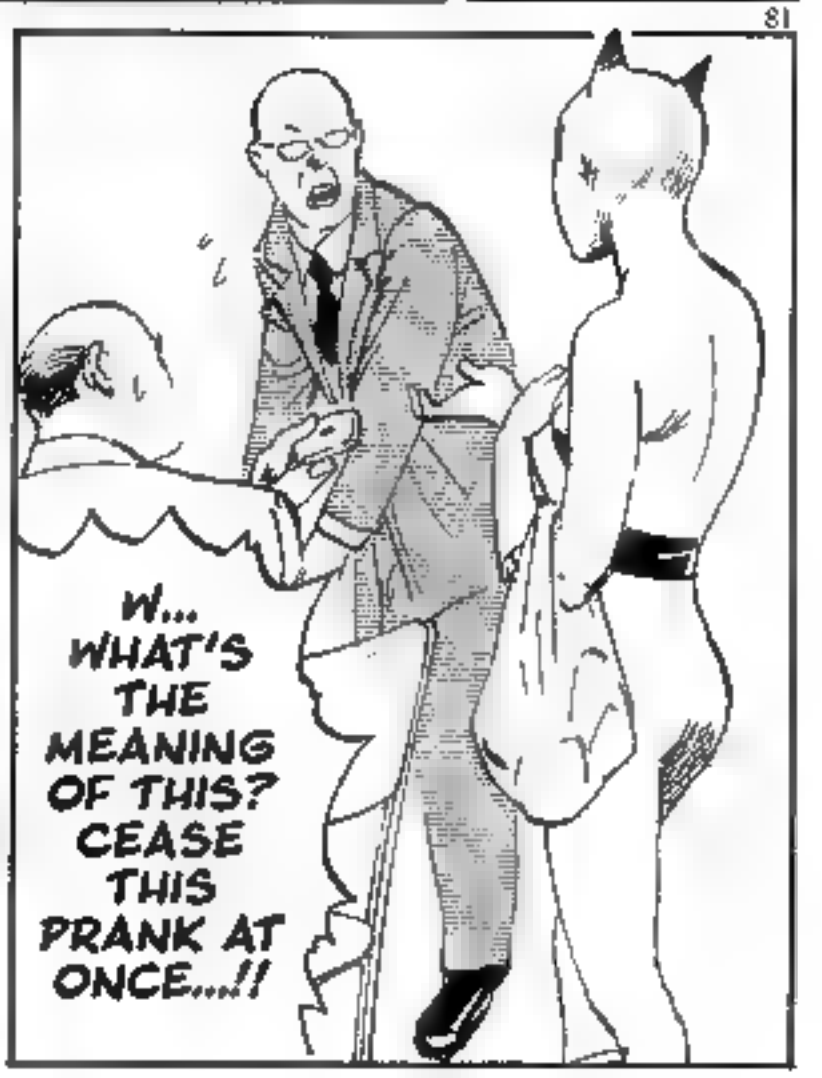
.....

The Eight Dog Warriors!

Hakken-gers...?


GATHER ALL THEIR CELL PHONES, HAKKEN-GER PINK!
SHHH! SHHH!
PIPE IT DOWN !!

THIS IS NO PRANK! YOU'D BETTER LISTEN TO US BEFORE YOU TASTE THE BUSINESS END OF MY PILE DRIVER!!


W... WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS? CEASE THIS PRANK AT ONCE...!!

You corrupt adults are always the same. You talk to people so self-righteously, while you're just as much of a sleaze-bag as anyone! And you blame your own crimes on others!

Presi-dent Ogikay atsu...

ALL SO YOU COULD SHIFT THE BLAME ONTO PROFESSOR MUNAKATA, AND OUST HIM!

This is all going according to the script you wrote. You conspired with Assistant Profes-sor Tamatsu, and fabricated the "hoax program" itself!

82

GO AHEAD AND CALL THEM! THEY'LL FIND OUT ABOUT YOUR EM-BEZZLING OF UNIVERSITY FUNDS!

T-T-THAT'S JUST ABSURD! I'M CALLING THE POLICE!

You only paid half of it to the construction company, while the rest went into your own pocket...

You couldn't keep glossing over your deficit, so you decided to swindle a two hundred thousand yen grant from the state to cover it, under the pretext of reconstructing the school building...

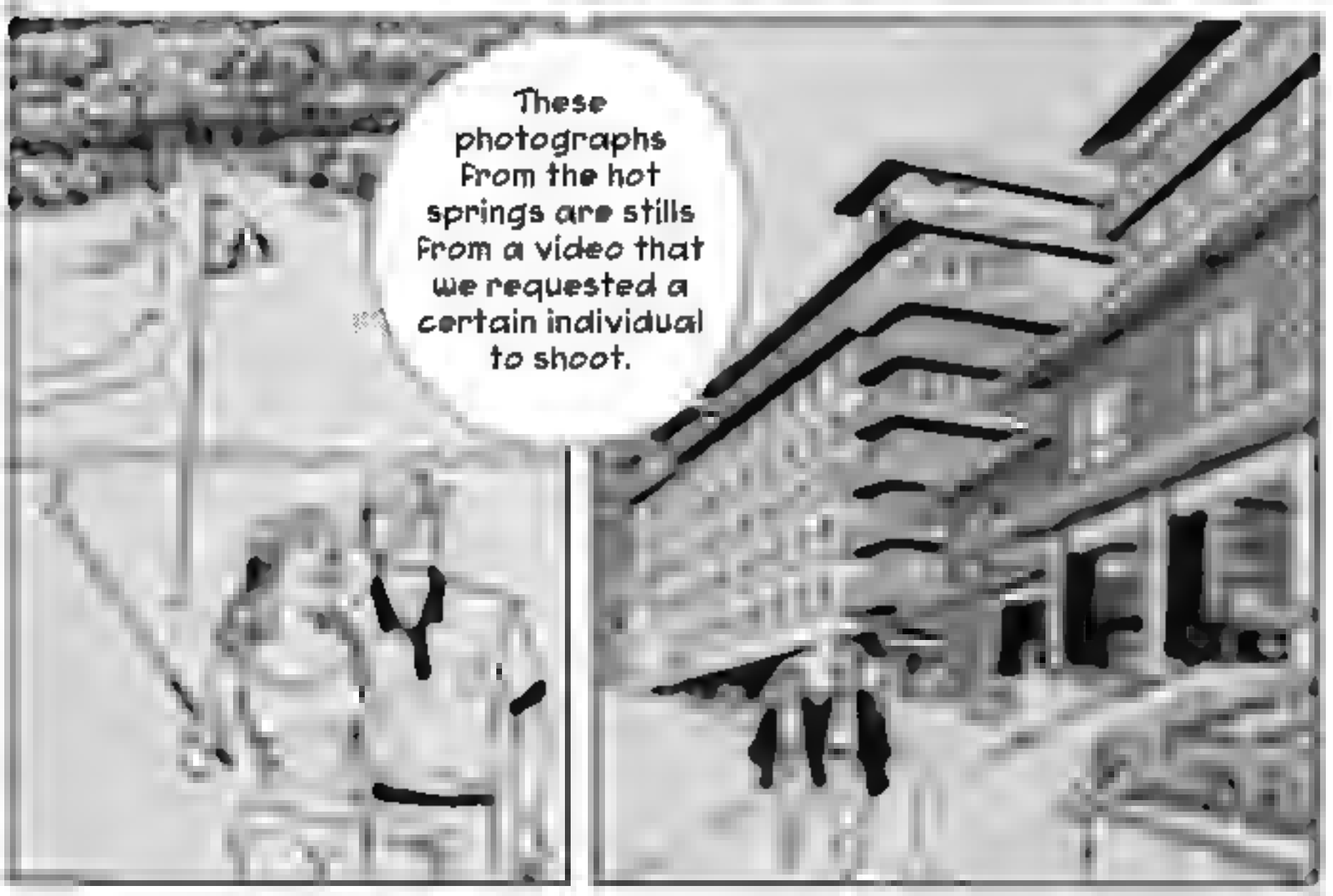
But because that company had connections to Ogakuen University in Kyushu, it got leaked to them...

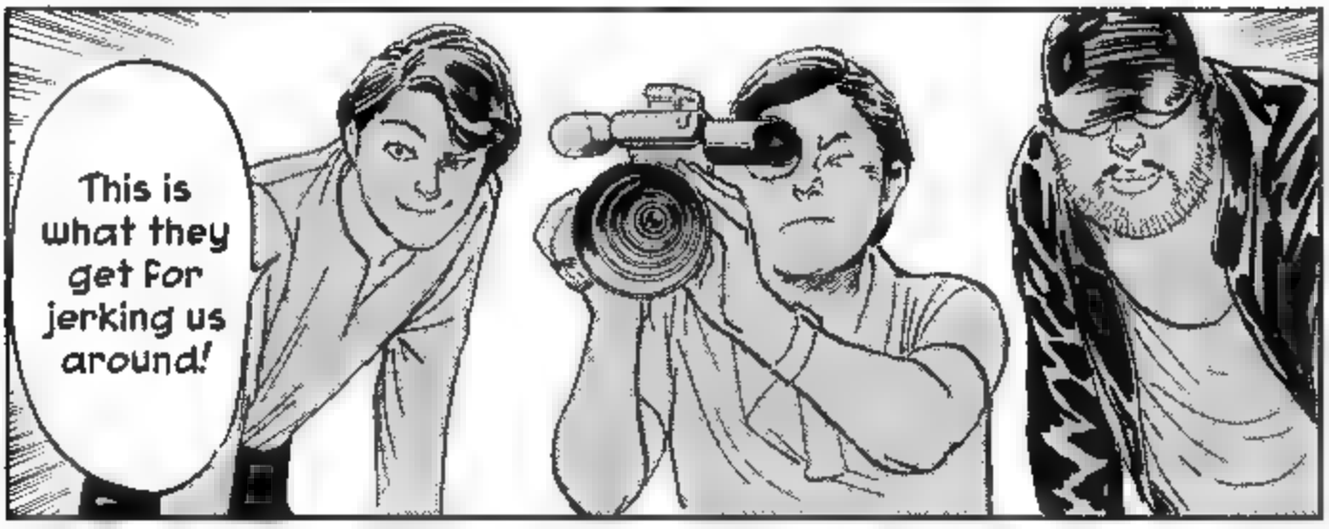
I'll cover your deficit, and overlook what's already been done! But if you refuse, I'll go public with everything.

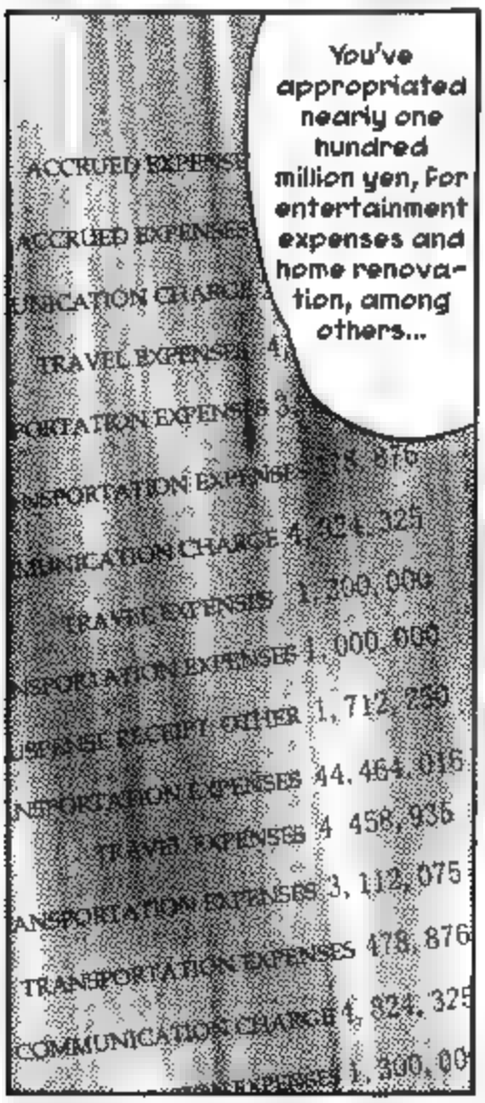
What do you say?

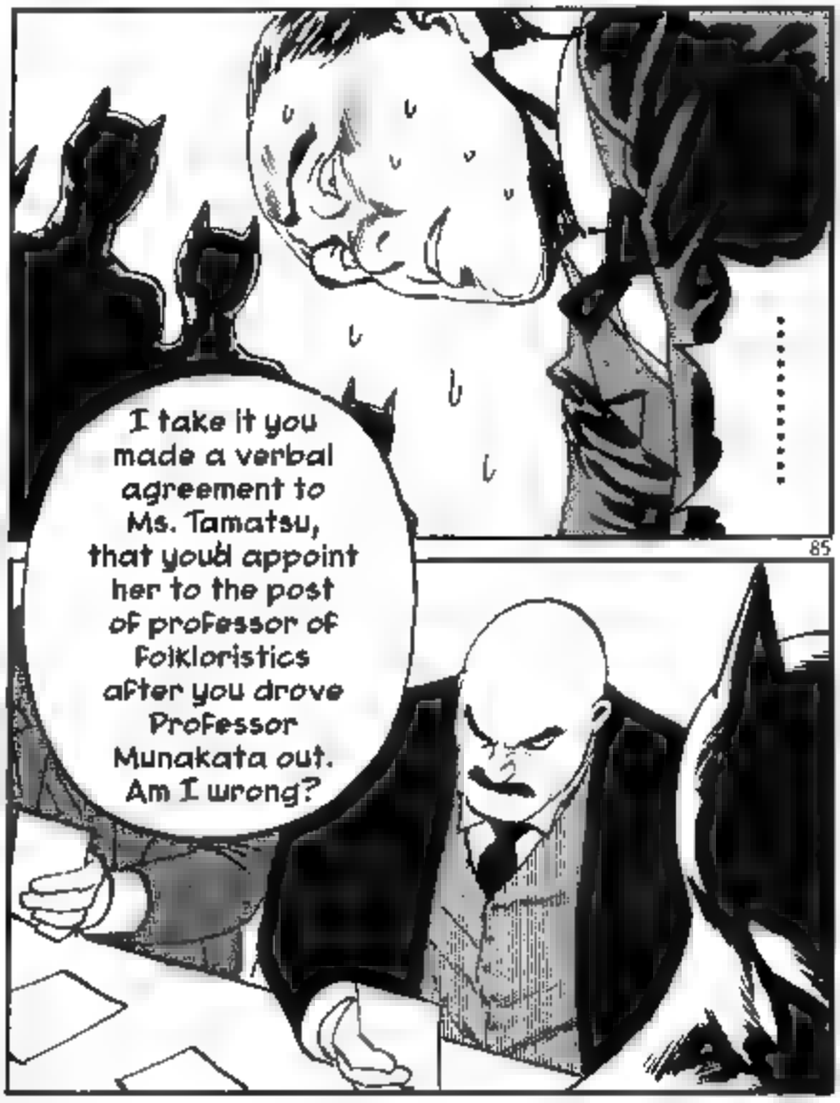
Become a subsidiary of Ogakuen, along with Satomi University!

our first piece of evi-dence...
CAN YOU
SENSE


These photographs from the hot springs are stills from a video that we requested a certain individual to shoot.


This is what they get for jerking us around!


You've appropriated nearly one hundred million yen, for entertainment expenses and home renovation, among others...
ACCRUED EXPENSE
ACCRUED EXPENSES
UNICATION CHARGE
TRAVEL EXPENSES 4,
PORTATION EXPENSES 3,
NSPORTATION EXPENSES 478,876
MUNICATION CHARGE 4,324,325
TRAVEL EXPENSES 1,200,000
NSPORTATION EXPENSES 1,000,000
USE/USE RECEIPT, OTHER 1,712,250
NSPORTATION EXPENSES 44,464,015
TRAVEL EXPENSES 4,458,936
ANSPORTATION EXPENSES 3,112,075
TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES 478,876
COMMUNICATION CHARGE 4,324,325
EXPENSES 1,300,00

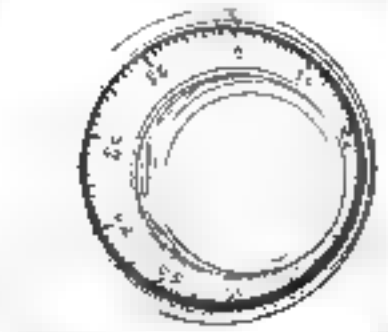

I take it you made a verbal agreement to Ms. Tamatsu, that you'd appoint her to the post of professor of folkloristics after you drove Professor Munakata out. Am I wrong?

This is a copy of your ledger which we downloaded from your accounts. You can see the general flow of money here.

Just as a precaution, we've secured a computer from the executive offices downstairs in a safe.

And it'll be impossible for you to delete or alter it from any other computer for a while...

.....



C... CALL THE POLICE! THE POLICE!!

H!!

W... WHAT THE ...!?

We've burned all the evidence to a CD, and submitted it to a news corporation.

And we're going to report this to the police, to make sure they get their hands on the computer in the safe.

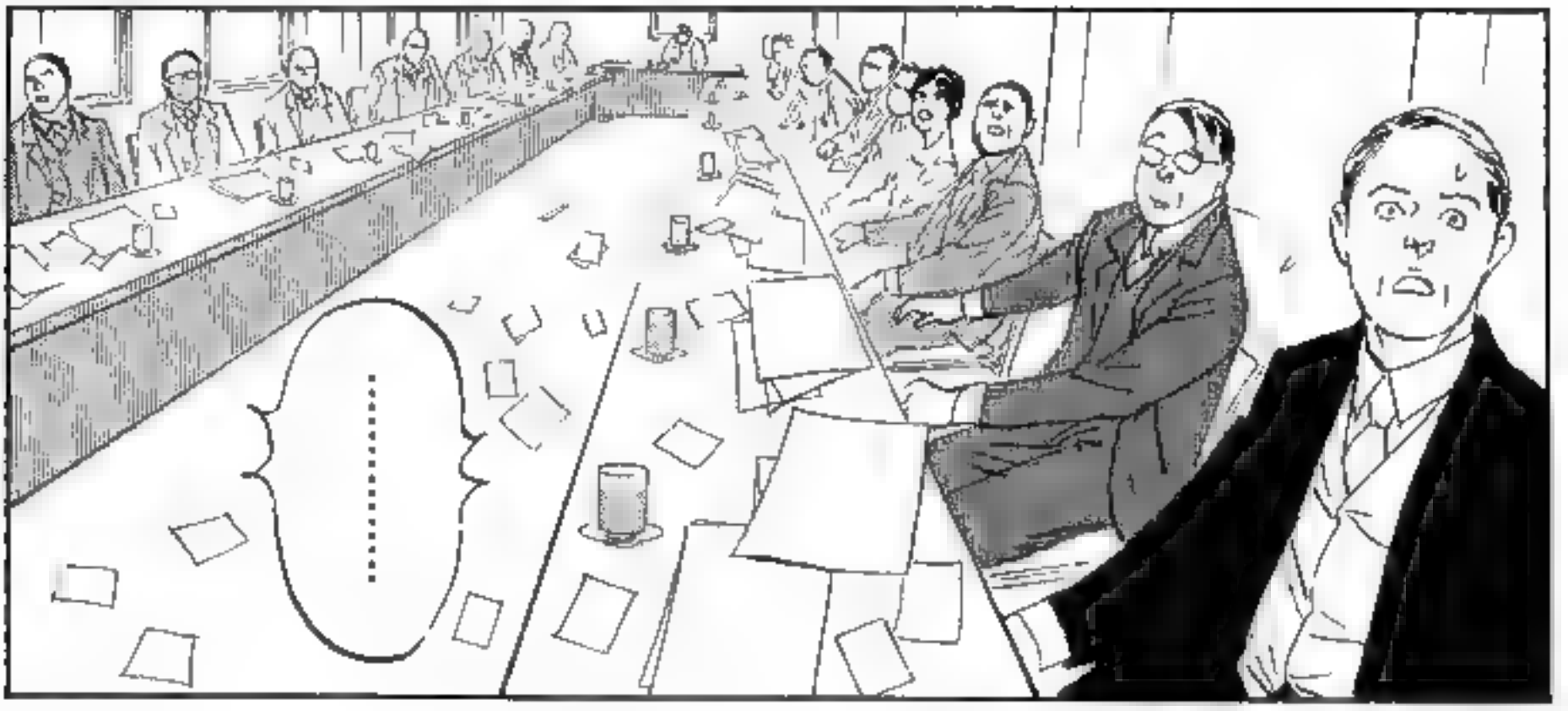
CRACK

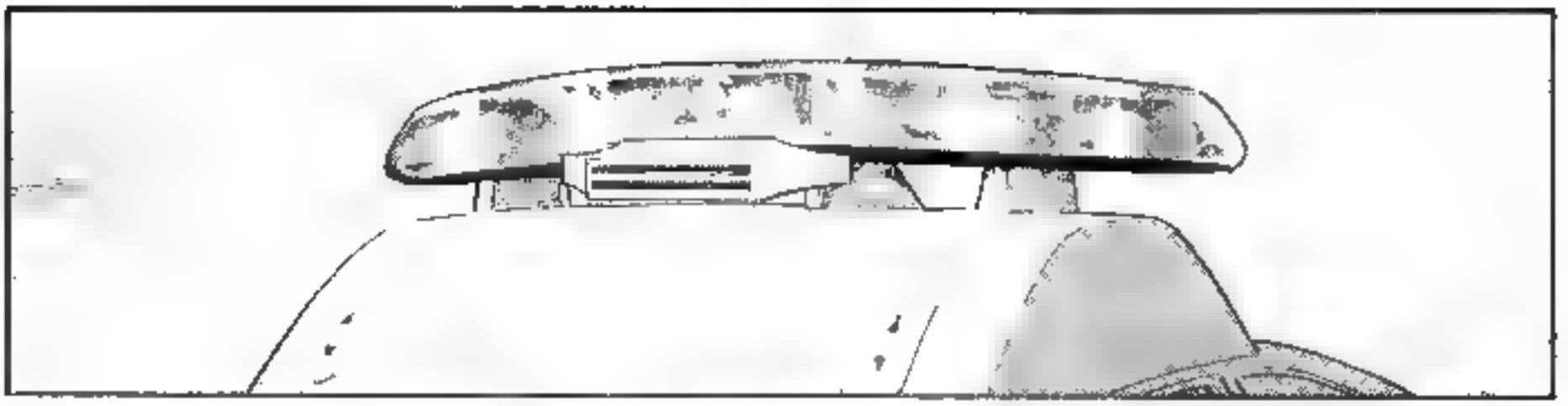
IRON SAND!? IT'S FILLED WITH IRON SAND!!

86

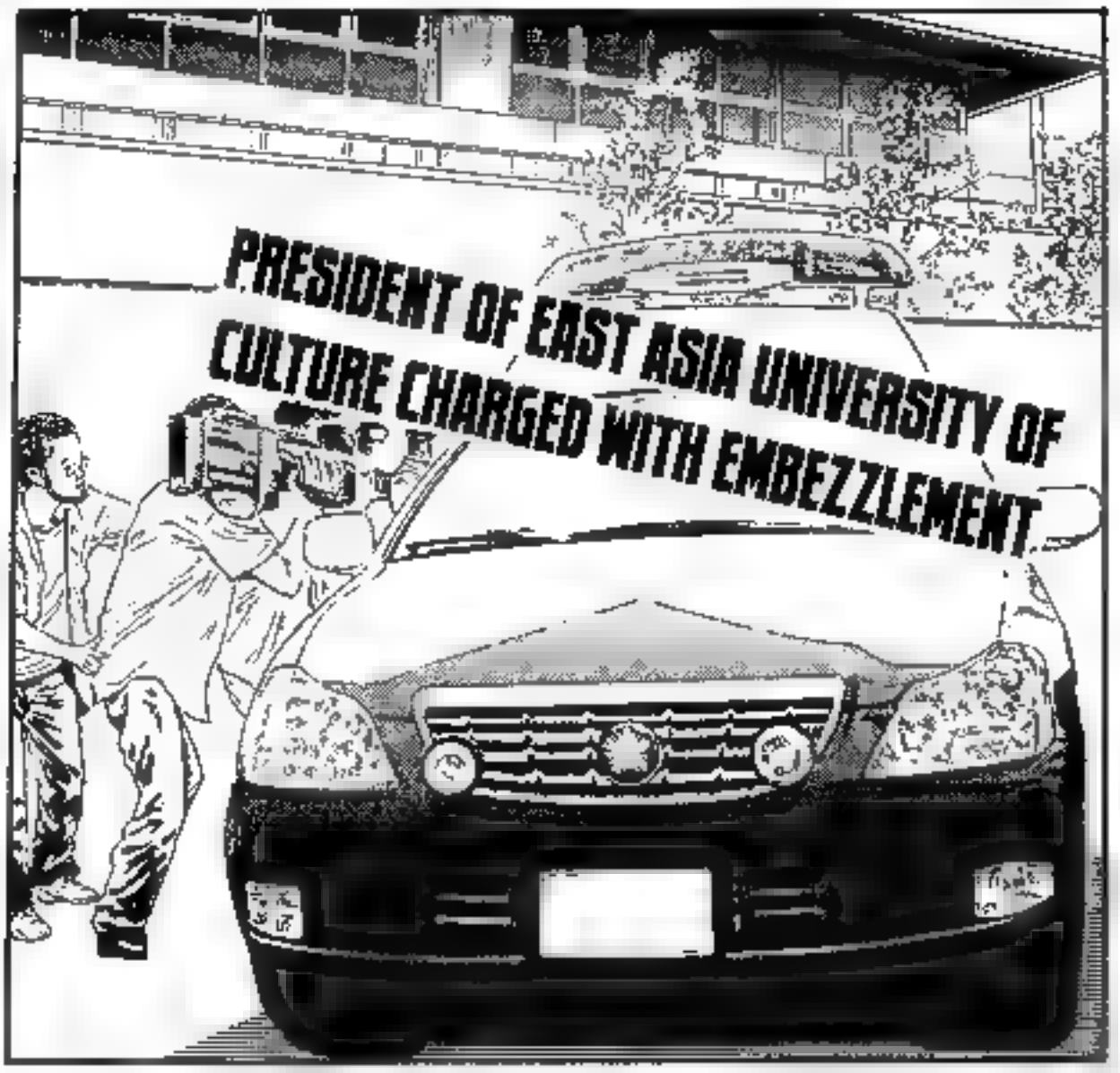
HAK-KEN-GERS, ROLL OUT!

So, no point in staying here any longer! We're going to go now!

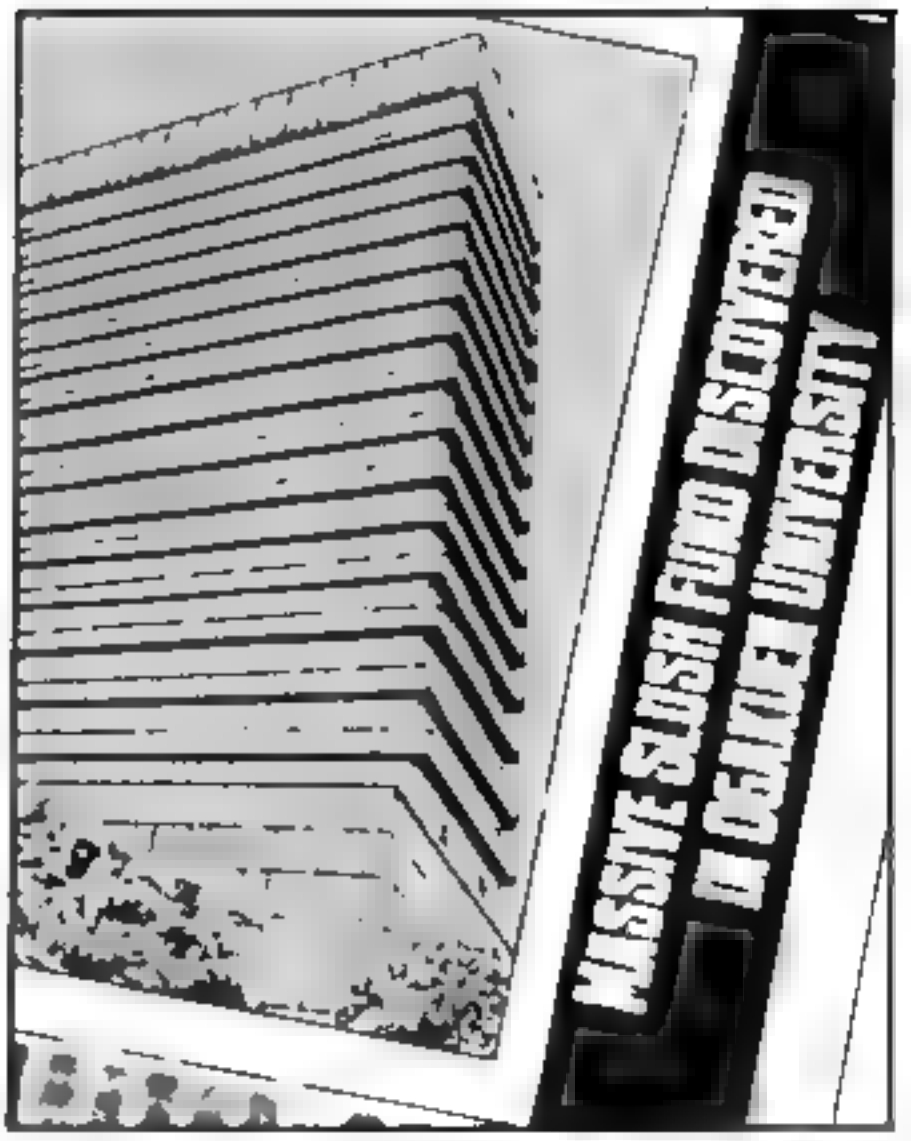

.....
.....
...YES, THEY WERE A GROUP WEARING STRANGE OUTFITS!! THEIR PURPOSE? I DON'T KNOW...
Executive Office
CRACK



EX-PRESIDENT ADMITS TO CHARGES


PRESIDENT OF EAST ASIA UNIVERSITY OF CULTURE CHARGED WITH EMBEZZLEMENT

90



OGAKUEN UNIVERSITY GIVES UP ON KANTO EXPANSION

CHAIRMAN TAKEMOGI RESIGNS

Ou Shrine, Ibaraki Prefecture

Kujukuri Beach,
Chiba Prefecture

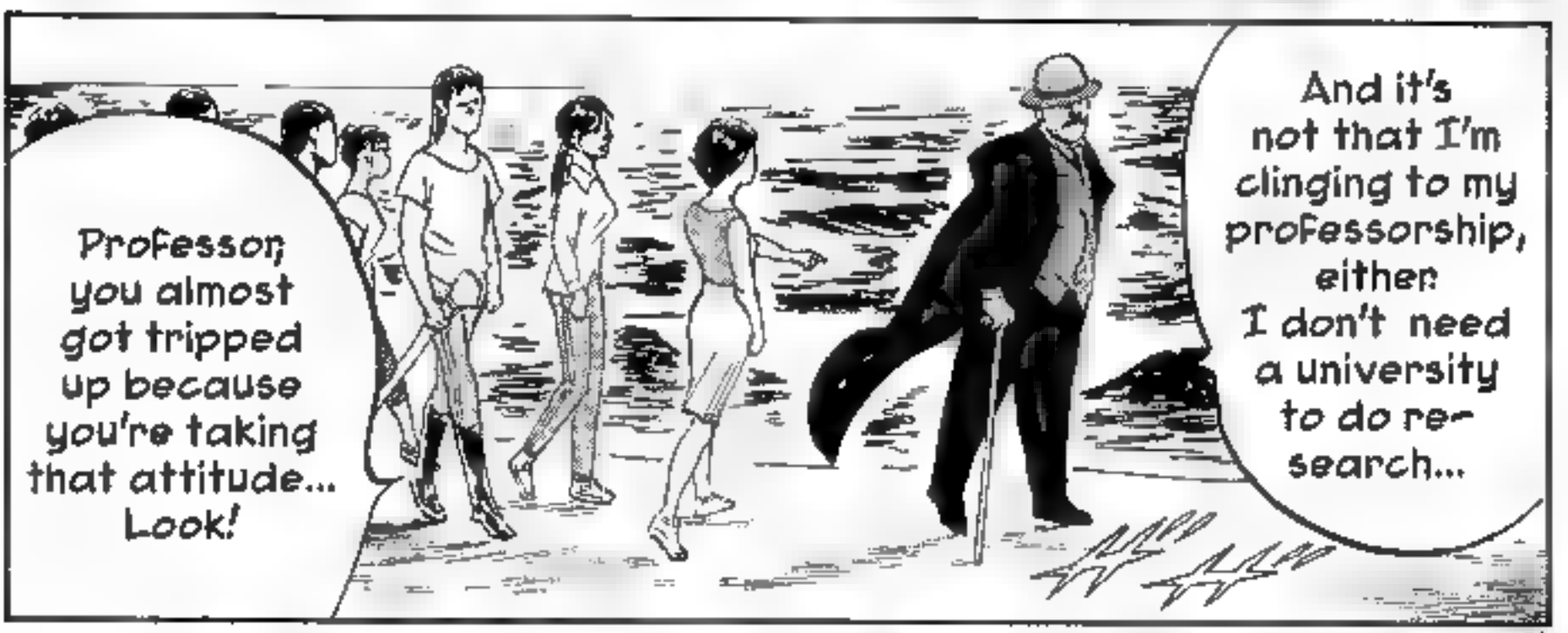
I was called here by the president of Satomi University... He apologized for everything.

Wow!

You're going to be our presi-dent!?

On top of that, he said he would resign as president and endorse me as his successor.

I don't want to be bogged down with more work than I need. I'm happy just being a professor
Huu uuuu uuh !?
Now, hold your horses. I turned down his offer.


Professor, you almost got tripped up because you're taking that attitude... Look!
And it's not that I'm clinging to my professorship, either. I don't need a university to do research...

Yes, I'm getting repeated reminders of my weak defenses ...

Whoa ...

Of course, it's the foolish professors that can't get that through their thick skulls that unwisely try to snap at me...

But if a scholar has time to spend on self-protection, he ought to use it to write a thesis.

We made it from the iron sand on this beach. We had our friends in the engineering department help out, too.

Ohhh ?

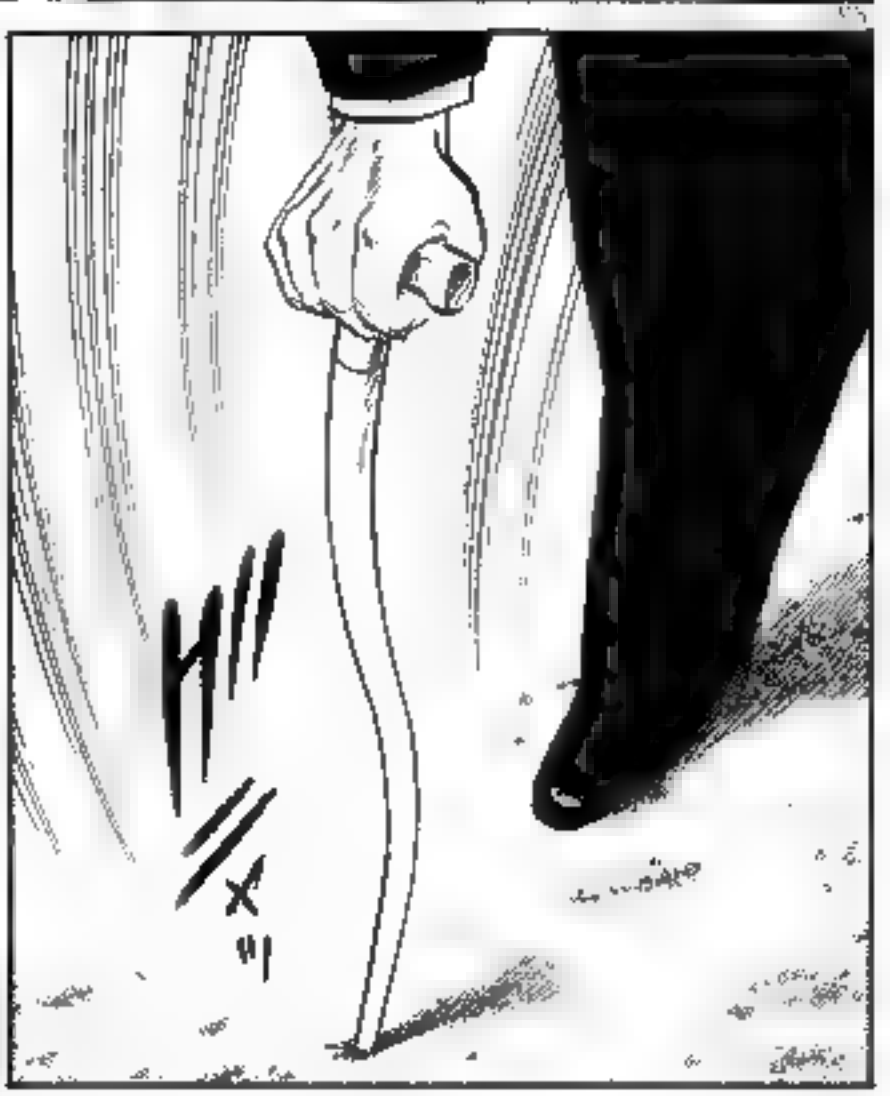
Here, Professor Munakata ...

I'm thinking of studying the folkloristics of iron while I work as a swordsmith!
I've taken an interest in the profession of blacksmithing.

Well, it's a little heavy, but it feels just about right.

Well, that sounds interesting. I'd like to hear what you find someday.

S...Sorry, I'm still not very good...
I guess the first lesson here is that iron tools made only of iron sand are weaker than you'd think.



HOORAY!!

Now, it's my turn to thank you. Why don't I treat the Eight Dog Warriors to a meal!?

Well, questioning is the basis of academia. I'll hang this up in my office.

It looks a little like a question mark.

THE OAKE RECORDS OF PROFESSOR MIYAMA

CHAPTER 21

PRESENTED BY

HOKUTO NO GUN

TRANSLATED BY

SYSTEMATICCHAOS

EDITING BY

HIGHTIDE AND KAZUHIKO

PROOFREADING BY

DESTORYERRING

CHAPTER 22:
KIBITSU'S CAULDRON

Okayama Prefecture

A howl from underground For thirteen years...!?

Well, it has a demonic image, to be certain. But some say that it was a prince that migrated here from Baekje.

Is the "Ura" buried there some kind of monster Dr Imibe?

URA

The Nihon Shoki says that a general by the name of "Kibitsuhiko" was dispatched to slay him during the reign of Emperor Sujin, but the locals say that he came to vanquish a demon.

Kibitsu Shrine, Okayama City

After a long and arduous battle, Kibitsuhiko, whose real name was Isaserihiko, shot Ura in the left eye.

He was beheaded, fed to the dogs, and buried deep underground, but Ura's moans would not cease for thirteen years...

Then one night, he appeared to Kibitsuhiko in his dream, to beseech that Asohime, his wife that lived in Aso Manor, cook him a food offering.

Aso was a village that produced ironware. They prepared the cauldron with which to prepare the meal offered to the gods in no time.

The cauldron resounded with a strange sound, and Ura promised that these sounds would foretell the fortunes of all things.

Kibitsu Shrine was then erected on that land, and the "Ritual of the Resounding Cauldron" is still performed by mediums called Aso Maidens to this day.

"Kibitsu's Cauldron"... I...I see.

I guess you're going for a horror-themed story for your historical column in next month's "Big Literature", to fit in with the summer!

And that's where you're wrong, Yokozuki!

The woman that endured her grief, and served her husband's head mound to quell his malice with kindness...

I'd like to write about the connection between Ura and Asohime, rather than the bloody battle.

Yes, I'm perfectly fine! Now let's go to Ura's Fortress of "Ki Castle"!

...Are you feeling okay, Dr. Imibe?

Isn't that the ultimate expression of love, for both men and women?

Ki Castle?

Mt. Kinojo, Soja City

Ki Castle was discovered after a bushfire sometime around 1970 The massive remains were surrounded by a stone wall 2.8 kilometers long, encircling the summit of the mountain.

It was said to be a Joseon-style mountain fortress on account of its shape, and there is a theory that it was built by settlers. However, its age and purpose are still unknown All that remains is the legend that Ura garrisoned himself in here to do battle.

A tatara ironworks furnace... It's on quite a large scale.

Hmm, that's interesting... Nekota, an Okayama native, told me about this excavation and referred me to you, Mr Nanba.

This further proves that ancient Kibi, which is rich in quality iron sand, was a major area for ironworks.

It probably dates back to the Nara Period. The oldest ironwork ruins in Japan have been discovered in the area of Ki Castle...

She told me to say hi to you, and to her club-mates.

Well, she's not from my university, but I happen to know her...

Nekota Mutsuki was my student in high school, and a member of the archaeology club. I didn't know you were acquainted with her...

Correct. I think that this was a region involved with ironworks since ancient times.

That's the birthplace of Asohime, and the Aso Maidens that perform the Ritual of the Resounding Cauldron.

The former Aso Manor is nearby here.

Mr. Nanba!

So that would mean that Ura and his clan were people that made iron, not scary demons?

What is it? I told you to dig in a place where you wouldn't disturb the excavation.

.....

Speaking of which, Ura's "demonic" form, and his loss of an eye, is tinged with the imagery of the god of ironworks.

It's not that deep... Is it a grave?
A... A rock just fell in and left a gaping hole...
A head... Almost like Ura's.

Why do you always look so unhappy to see me?

...I see. So this time we've crossed paths because of Ura...

Where did Yokozuki go?

I'd be afraid to have you as my enemy, and you'd ignore me if I was a stone, no?

I think it'd do you well to start smiling to women.

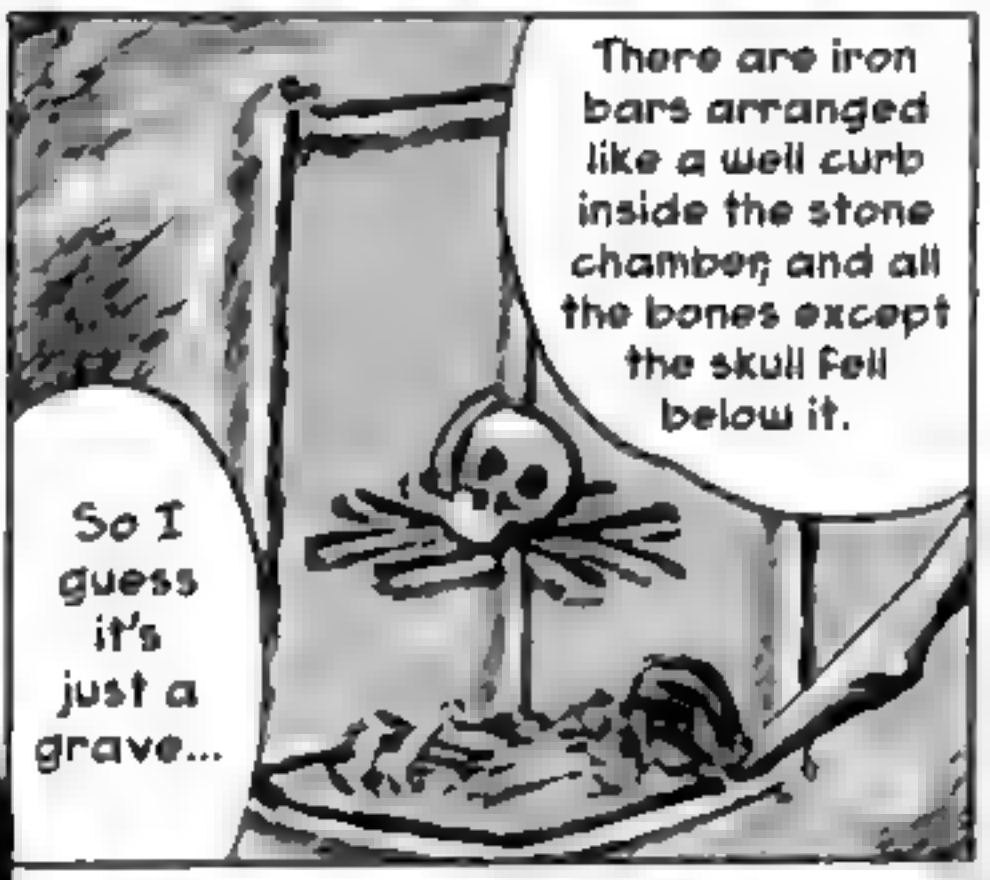
Otherwise, they'll either regard you as an enemy or a stone.

He had a sudden stomach-ache...

It looks like you've fallen into a lot of people's black books.

No... The limb bones are scattered at the bottom. It looks like a full body.

Do you think this is a "head mound," Mr. Nanba?
It looks like it's a lot later than the iron furnaces...


There are iron bars arranged like a well curb inside the stone chamber, and all the bones except the skull fell below it.
So I guess it's just a grave...

Hmm... I feel like I've seen this kind of structure before...

Thanks, Yokozuki. I didn't expect you to cover my lodging fee as well.

I never knew that your publisher was that profitable. Hahhahha!

But in return, I'd like you to join me for a drink tonight!

N...No, not at all... I'm just repaying you for the help you've given me...

I have no idea...

...Is she feeling okay?

Speaking of Kibitsu's Cauldron...

There's this story in Ueda Akinari's "Tales of the Rain and Moon", from the Edo period.

In order to get him to settle down, they had him married to Isora, the daughter of the priest of Kibitsu Shrine.

The Izawas were wealthy farmers of the Province of Kibi, and they had a son named Shotaro But he was a carouser that caused his family nothing but worry.

They tested the Resounding Cauldron to divine the fortune of the marriage, and no sound resounded.

This was an omen of disaster!

He finally took advantage of Isora's gentleness to sell her garments, and eloped with Sode, with the money he contrived from his family in hand

Sure enough, Shotaro did not mend his ways. He ransomed a prostitute named Sode, and would not return home

Isora passed away in rage and despair.

Seven days later, Sode suddenly died during their elopement.

An exorcist informed Shotaro that he was being haunted by Isora's spirit, and ordered him to seclude himself in a room for 42 days

He endured a battle with the vengeful spirit in the darkness for 42 days

Believing that it was finally over, and the morning of the 43rd day had come, he opened the door...

But when that morning truly came, all that remained was vast pools of blood.

Urk ...

You've gotta be kidding me! Just the sight of Professor Munakata's face gives me a stomachache, and now they're telling ghost stories on top of that...?

P... Pardon me for a sec.

Yes, I suppose ...

Hehehe... I guess this is what you get when you make an enemy of a woman.

I think there are similarities between this story of Kibitsu's Cauldron and the legend of Ura.

20

They were fools that didn't even give a thought to their wives!!

Ura and Shotaro were both men that lived wild lives.

And as retribution, they are reduced to a helpless state, where their wives seize hold over their Final destiny.

...I see. Ura is quelled by Asohime while underground, while Shotaro is haunted to death by Isora in the sealed room...

They're tales of love and vengeance.

From the woman's point of view, that is...

H... Hey!

So what were you thinking about when we were by the ironwork ruins at the Foot of Ki Castle...?

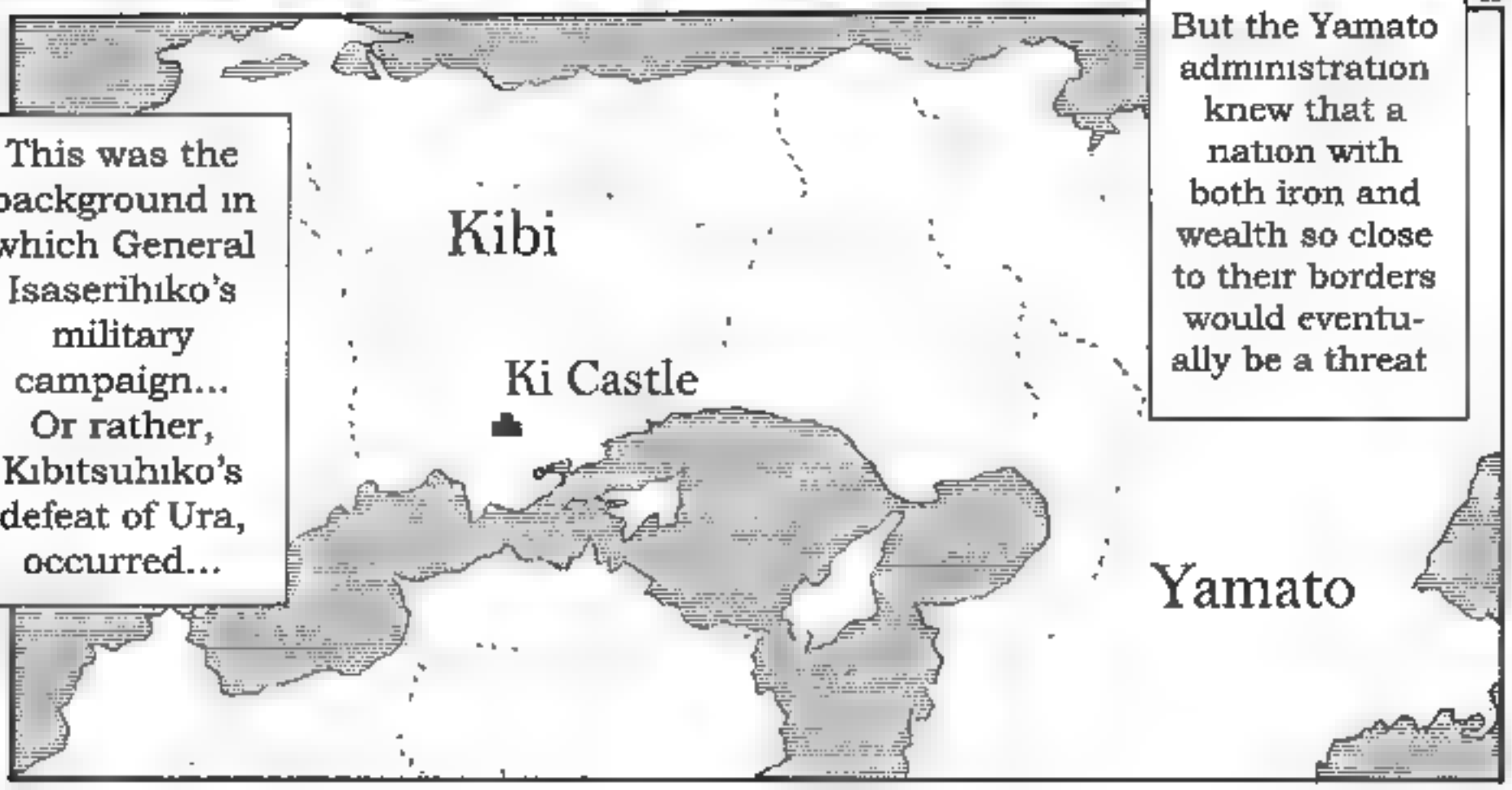
The first bearers of iron-age civilization, which began in the Yayoi period, were the settlers from the Korean peninsula.

In search of quality iron sand, they built bases in Izumo and Kibi. They also possessed all kinds of knowledge, from mineral resources to military technology, and even to herbs. They were sometimes called the Mountain Intellectuals.

The ancient kingdom of Kibi may have prospered on the corner-stone of that civilization...

But the Yamato administration knew that a nation with both iron and wealth so close to their borders would eventually be a threat

This was the background in which General Isaserihiko's military campaign... Or rather, Kibitsuhiko's defeat of Ura, occurred...

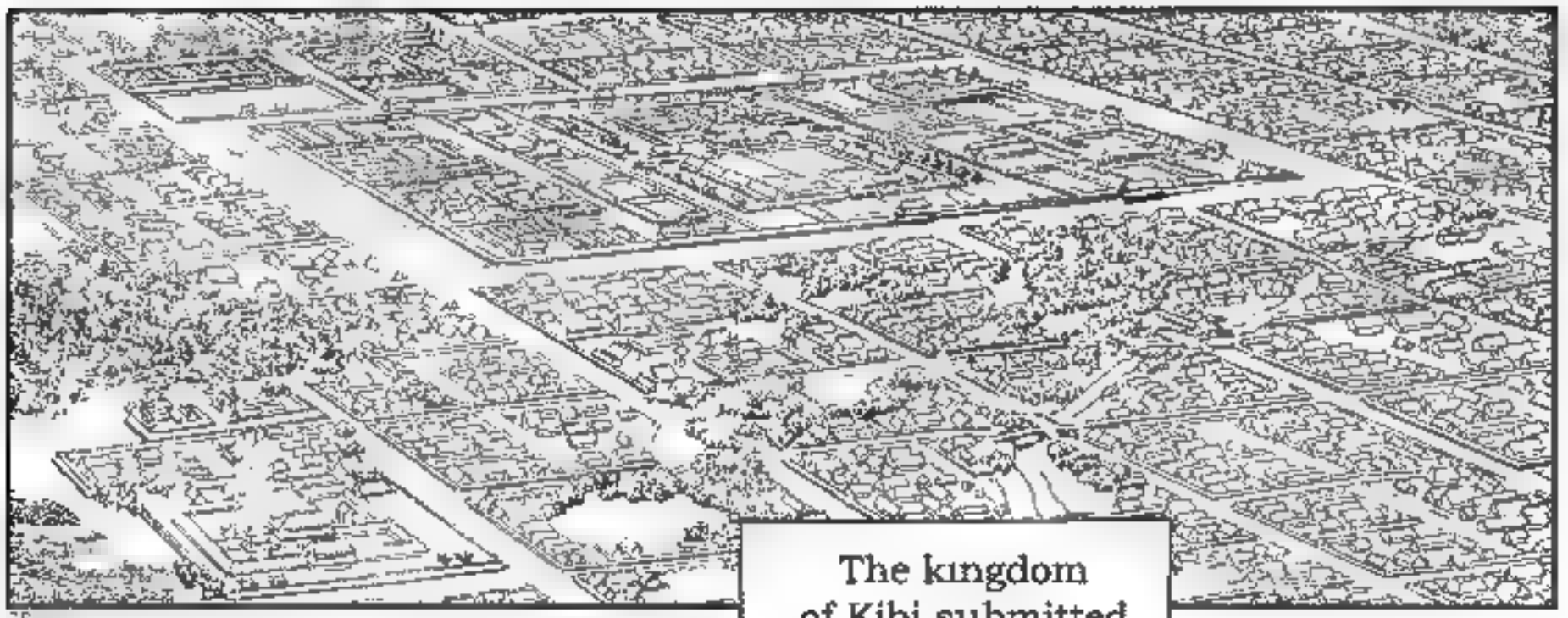


Zz
zz
just alone

Ironwork-Related Ruins
Okayama Prefecture
Throughout the Yayoi period, people involved in ironworks migrated from the Korean peninsula, and laid their roots in the mountains of Chugoku, which was abundant in quality iron sand and fuel.
They made farming implements and weapons out of iron, which led Kibi (Okayama Prefecture), which extended to the south, to become a powerful kingdom.

But the Yamato administration must have used a political maneuver to strip them of their power and rob them of their wealth.

The legend of the battle between the Baekje settler Ura and Kibitsu-hiko may have been from a civil war within the kingdom of Kibi caused by that maneuver.



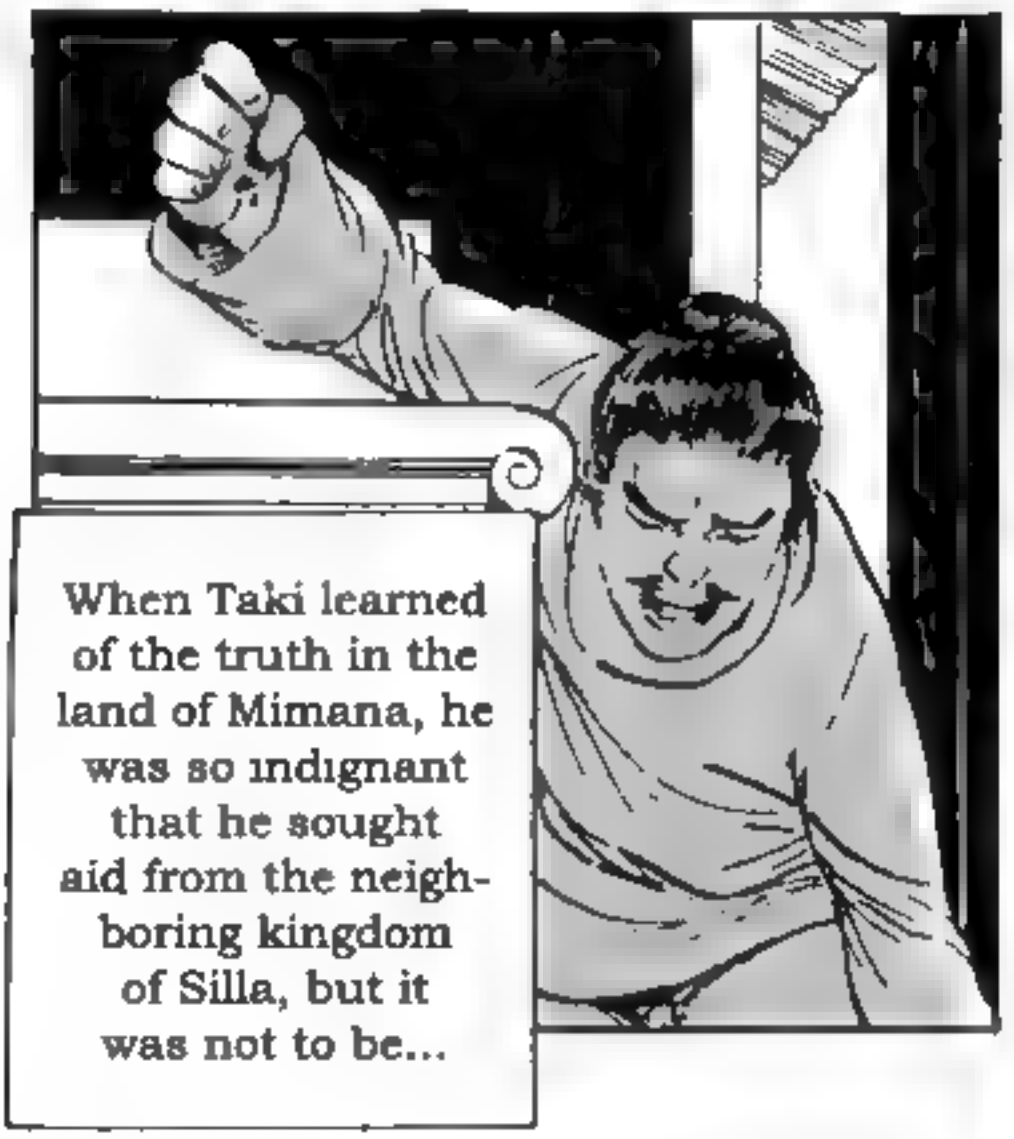
The kingdom of Kibi submitted to Yamato, but according to the Nihon Shoki, Yuryaku, the emperor of the time, was such a severe man that he executed seventy omi of Kibi for betrayal.

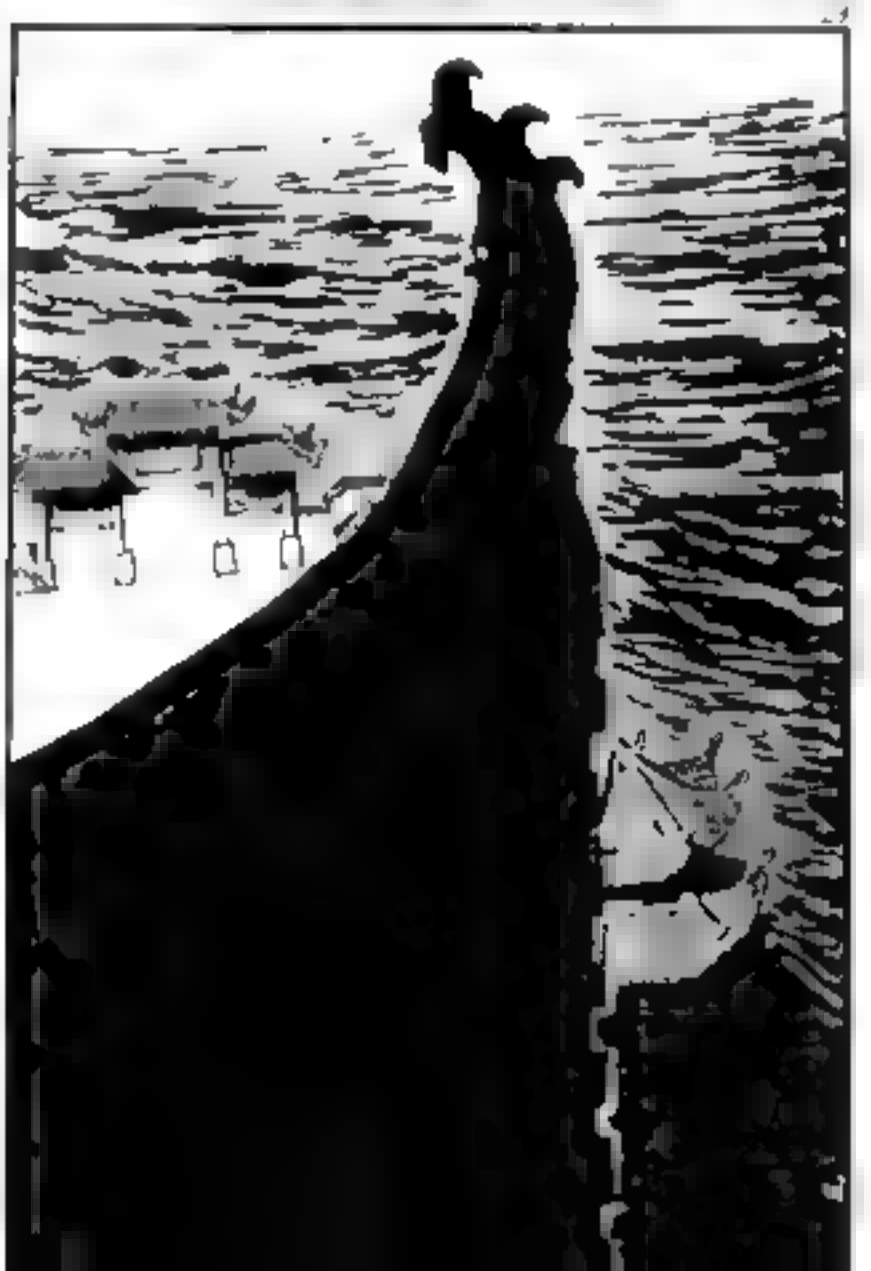
An omi from the Province of Kibi by the name of Kibi-no-Taki came, and served in the Emperor's palace.

Taki had a wife named Wakahime, and he boasted of her as being the most beautiful in the world.

Goguryeo
Silla
Mimana
(Gaya)
Baekje
It was soon afterwards that Kibi-no-Taki was dispatched to Mimana (Gaya) on the Korean peninsula, as provincial governor.

And his wife Wakahime was invited to Emperor Yuryaku's palace, and made his court lady.


When Taki learned of the truth in the land of Mimana, he was so indignant that he sought aid from the neighboring kingdom of Silla, but it was not to be...



Later, he learned that Emperor Yuryaku had sired a prince through Wakahime.

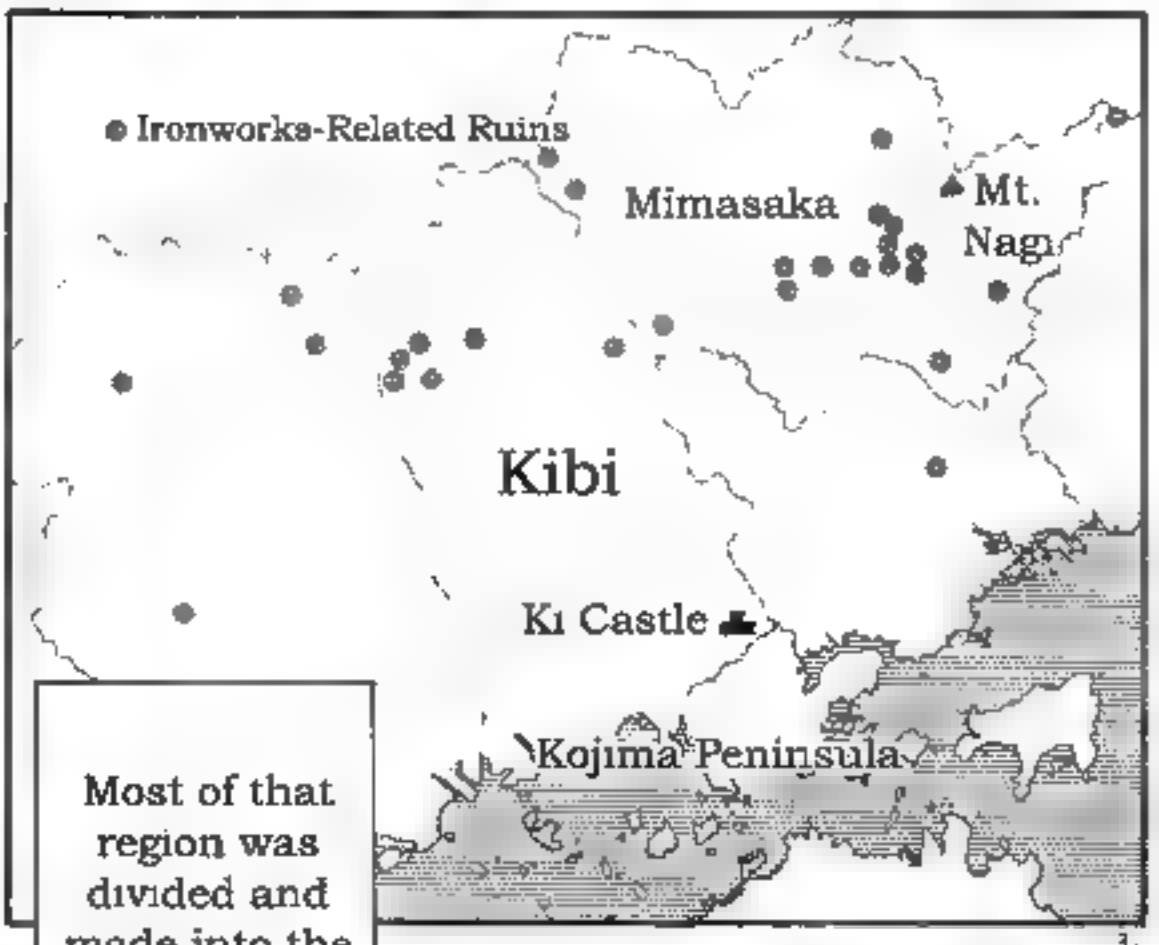
There are no records of Kibi-no-Taki returning to Japan.

But the promptly-enthroned Emperor Seinei killed Wakahime and her family, and Kibi's last hope was crushed.

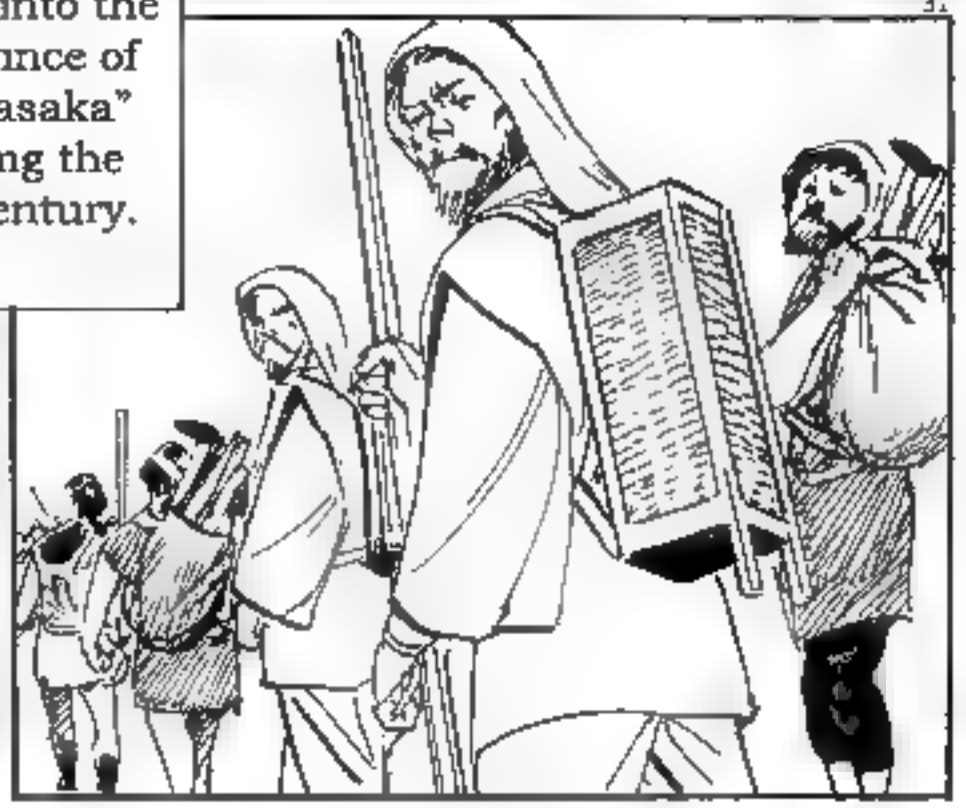
After Emperor Yuryaku's death, Wakahime occupied the office of the Ministry of Finance to make her son, Prince Hoshikawa, his heir... Reinforcements from the Province of Kibi were sent, as well.

The people that were involved with mountain resources were called "Yamabe", so you could say that the critical industry of ironworks was taken from Kibi at that moment.

As punishment for this incident, the Nihon Shoki says that the "Yamabe" were taken from the Kibi



Most of that region was divided and made into the "Province of Mimasaka" during the 8th Century.



I see!
So that's how the ironworkers from the Chugoku region spread throughout the country.

the sword-smiths that made the bracken swords, were emigrated to take their place...

I think that the Emishi of Tohoku...

Ki Castle,
Okayama Prefecture

So I guess... that they may have been the origin of those famous swords like Bizen Osafune.

More importantly, Mr Nanba, I believe I asked you if you found out anything about those bones from yesterday.

Yes, I was just getting to that. We're bringing in the university to start a more detailed study...

"Self-mummification"!

Mummified ...!?

But while the bones are scattered, it looks like it was originally mummified.

I see. So that's why the structure of this stone chamber seemed so familiar...

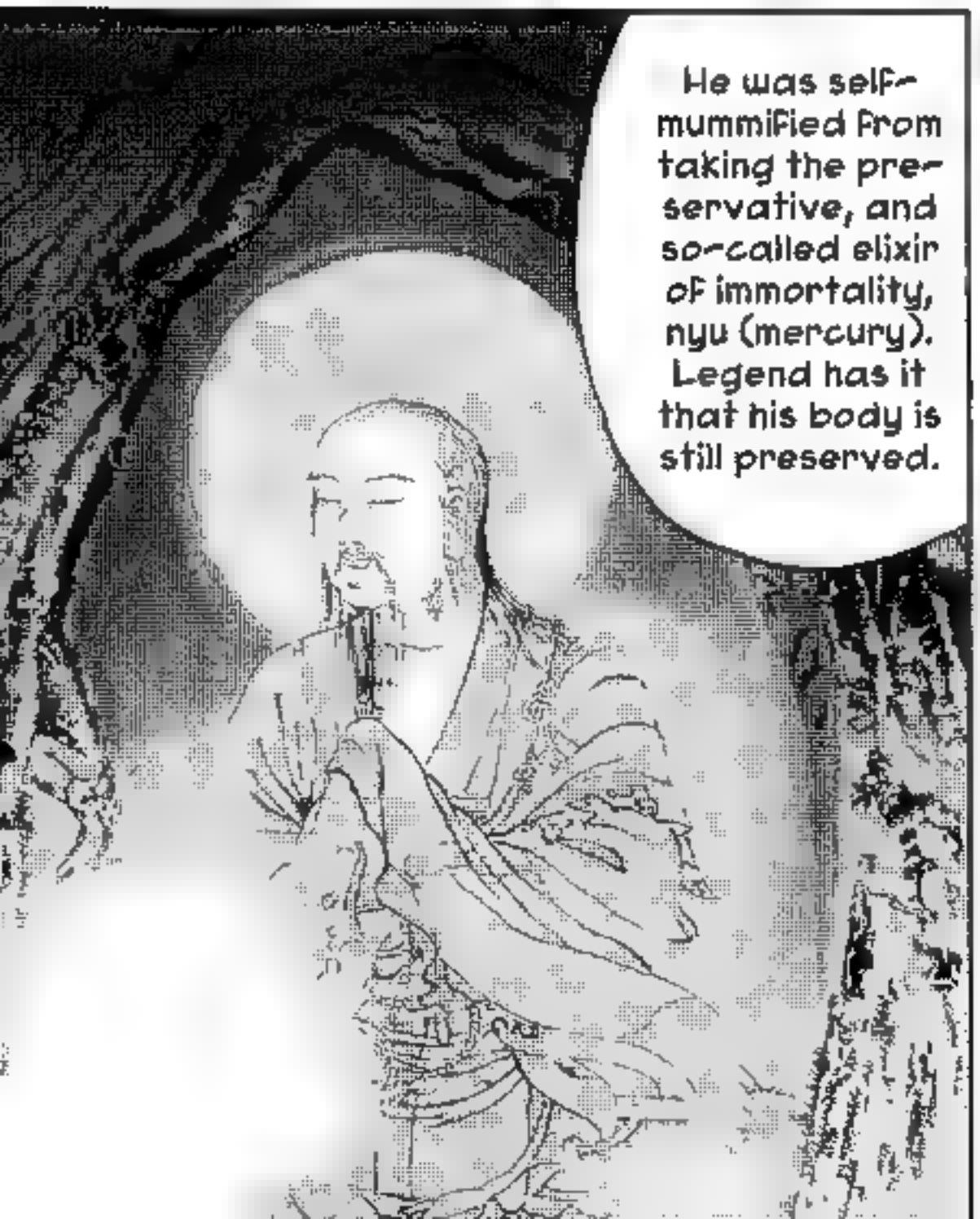
Y...You mean the self-mummification where they enter the casket alive, and are dug up after they're mummified?

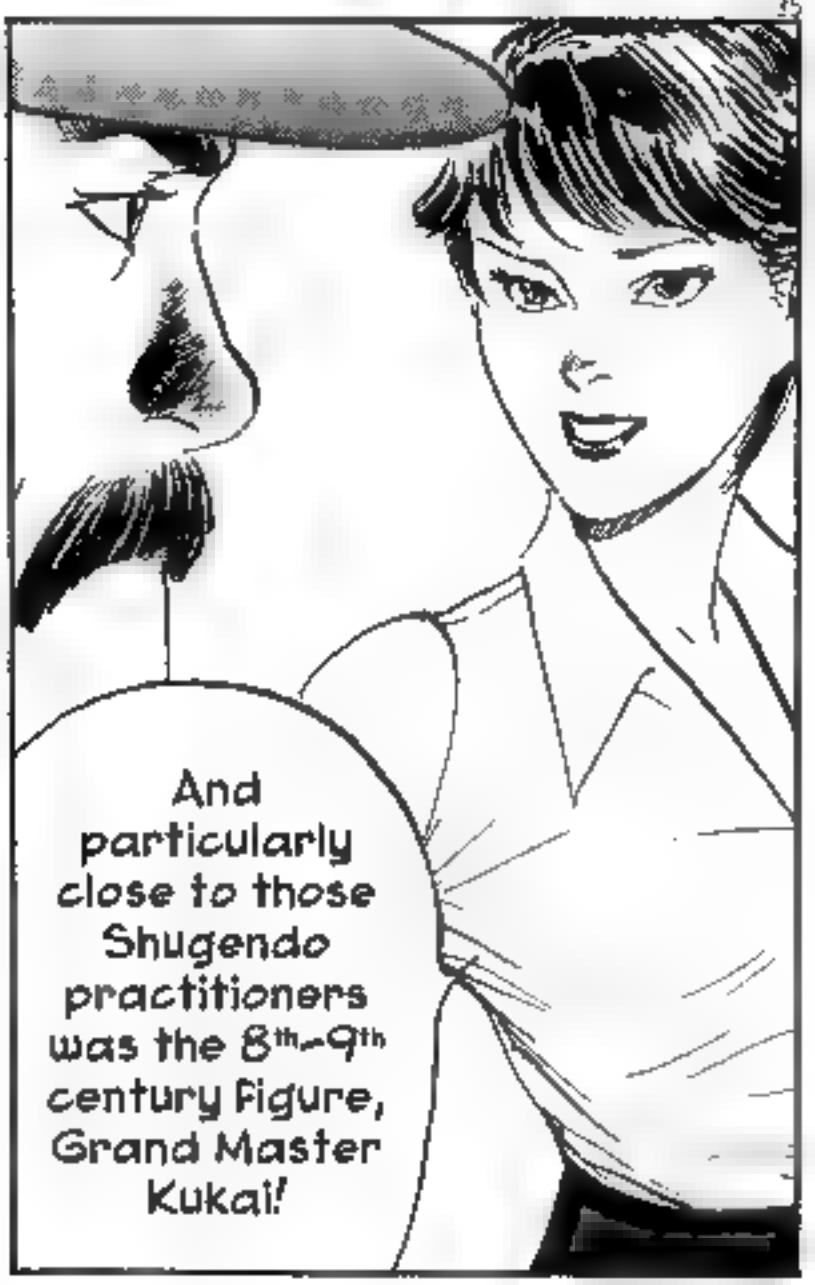
That reminds me, the Kojima Peninsula in Okayama was home to a Shugendo site called the "Five Currents of Kojima".

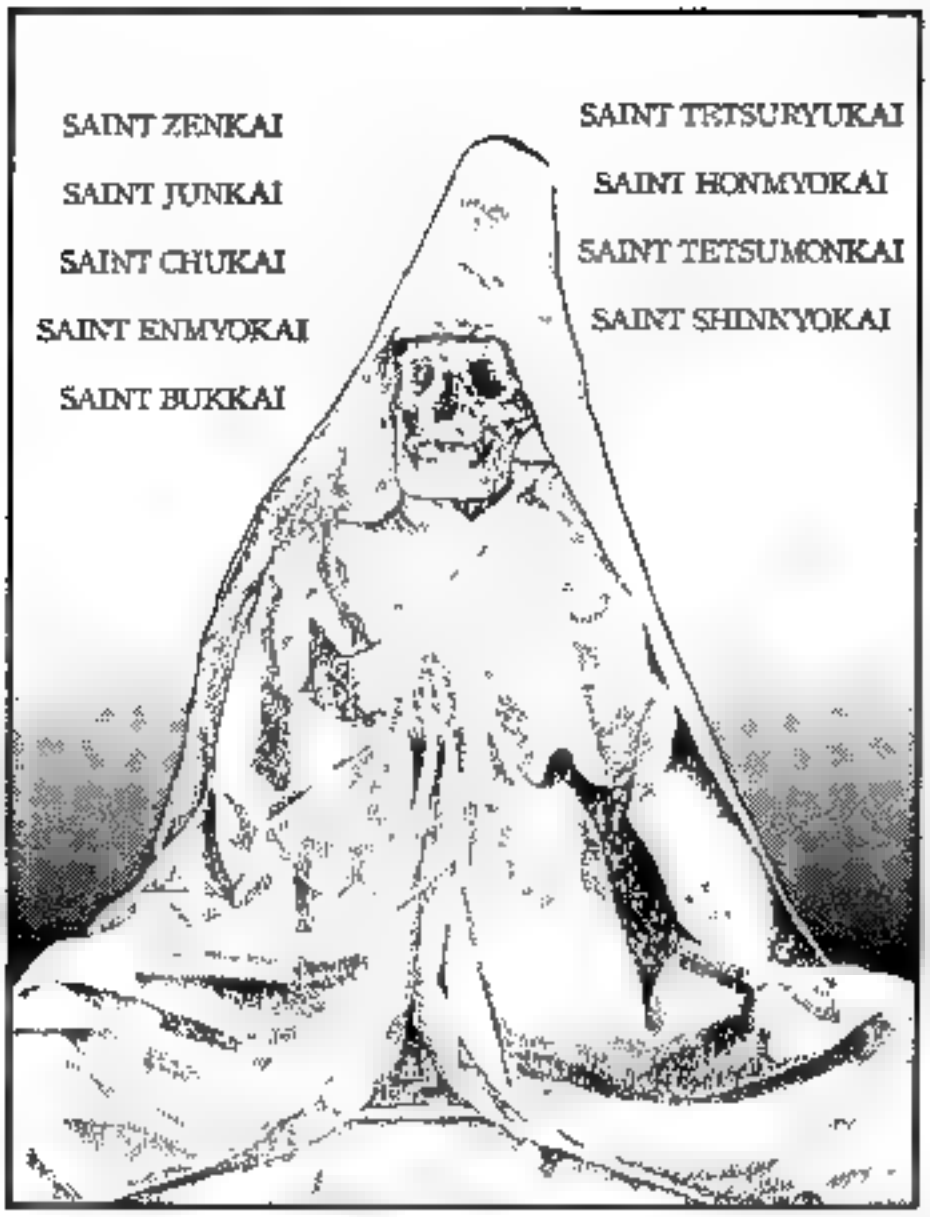
This is a special kind of stone chamber where the floor is raised with iron bars to keep the casket from flooding.

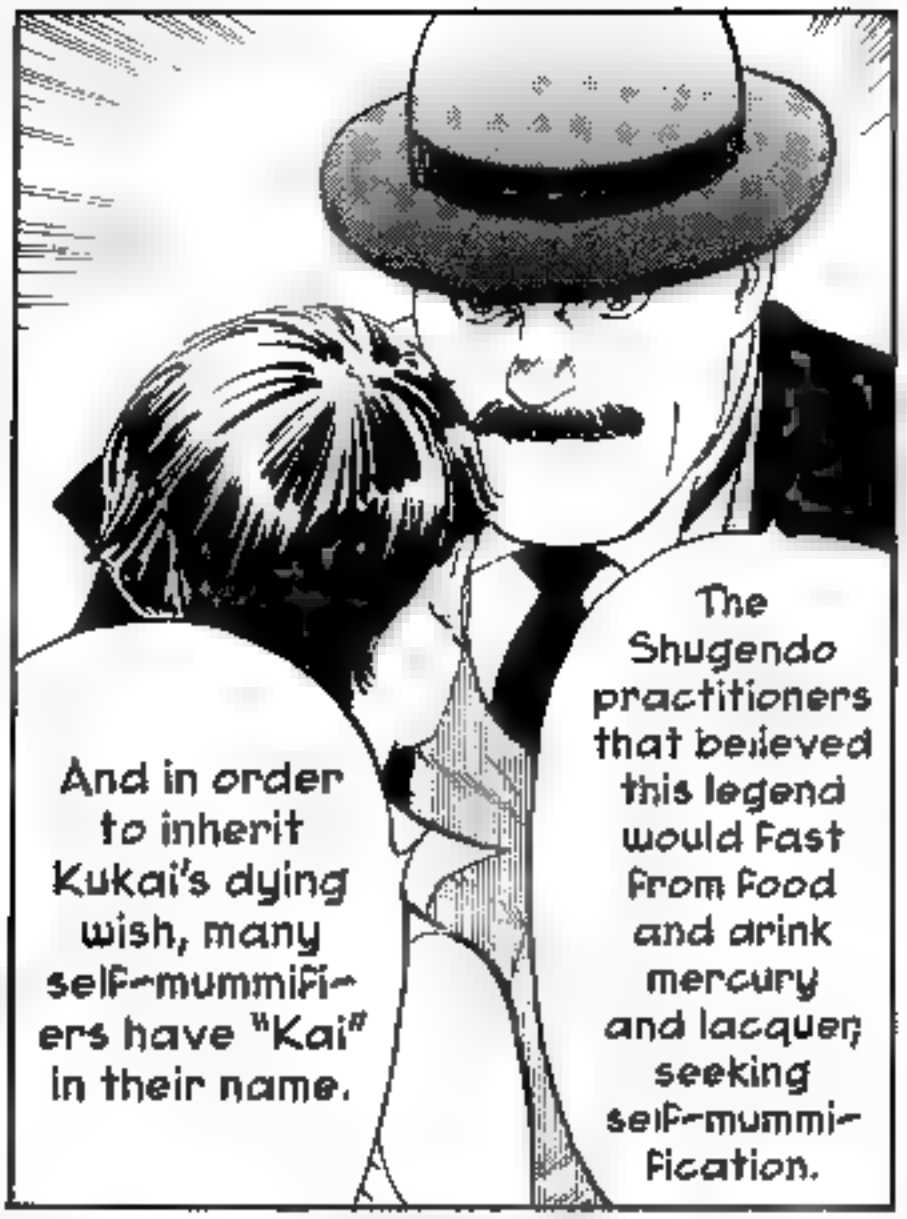
Self-mummification is common in Yamagata, due to the Shugendo site of the Three Mountains of Dewa...

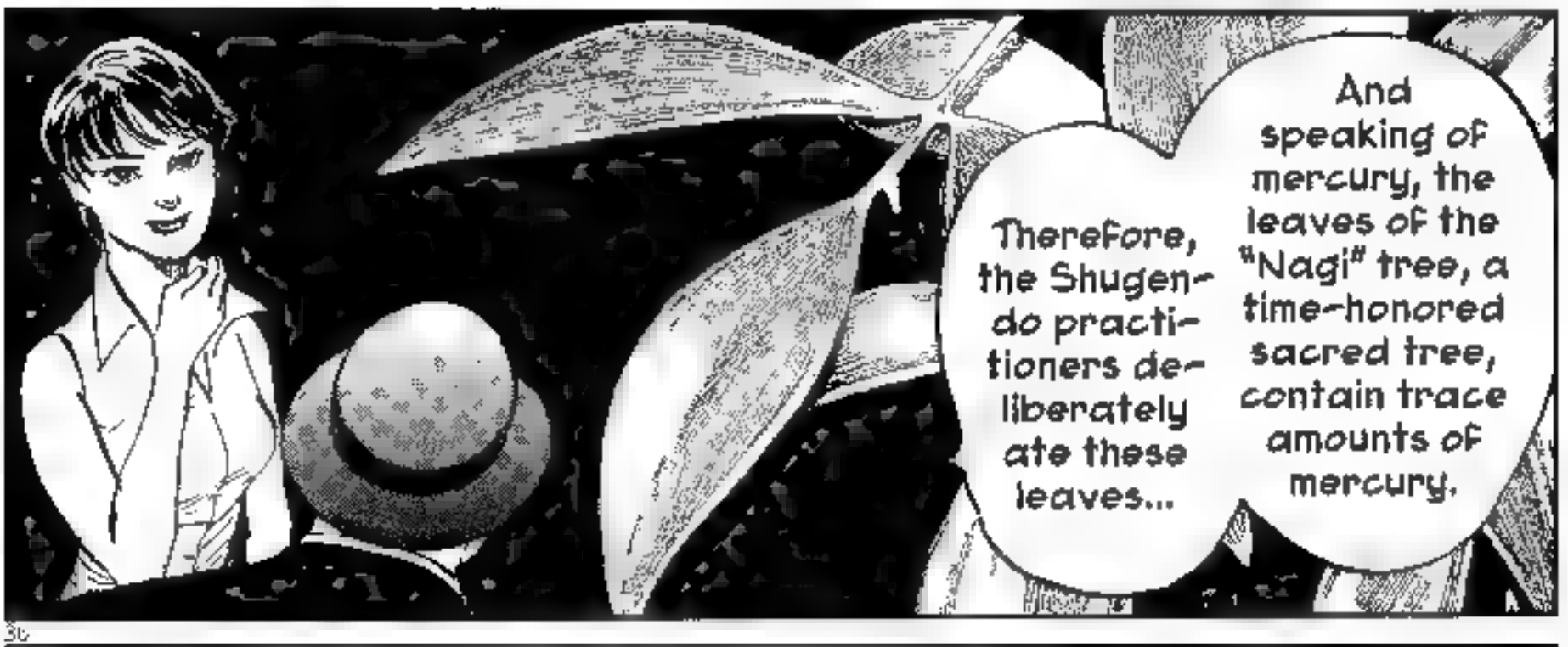
A group with mineral, herbal, and even chemical knowledge spread throughout the mountains of Japan.
The people engaged in ironworks in the mountains were called the Yamabe... the mountain people. I think that a portion of them later came to be known as the mountain priests and Shugendo practitioners.

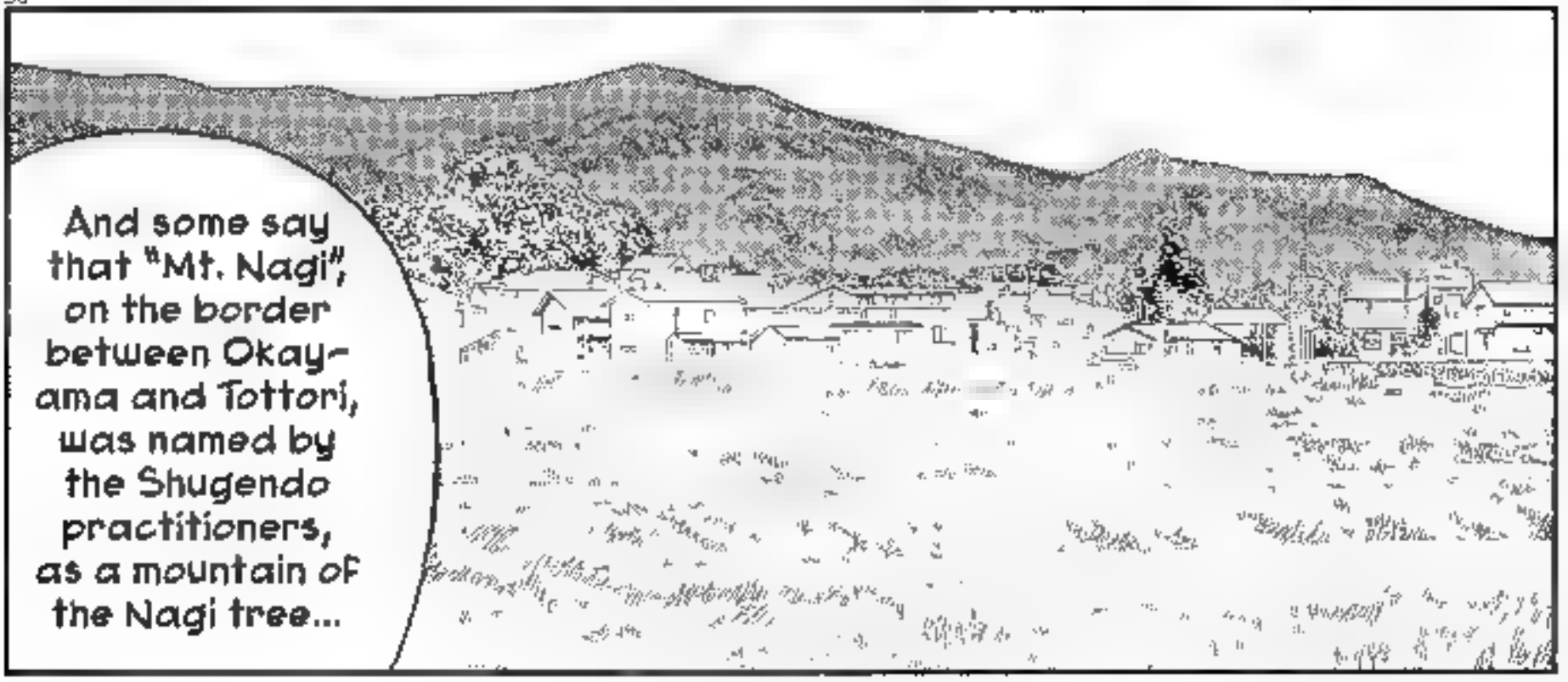

He was self-mummified from taking the preservative, and so-called elixir of immortality, nyu (mercury). Legend has it that his body is still preserved.


And particularly close to those Shugendo practitioners was the 8th-9th century figure, Grand Master Kukai!

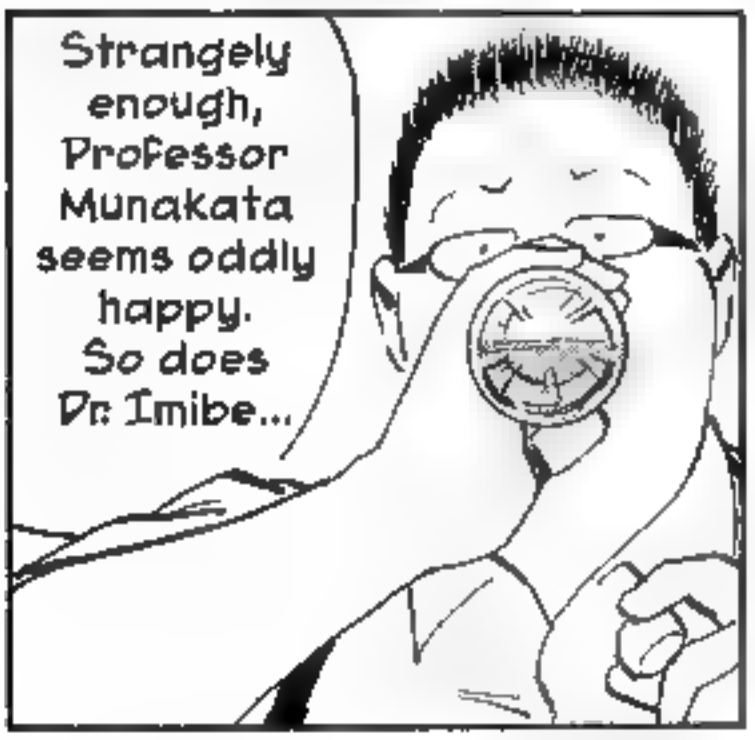

SAINT ZENKAI
SAINT JUNKAI
SAINT CHUKAI
SAINT ENMYOKAI
SAINT BUKKAI
SAINT TETSURYUKAI
SAINT HONMYOKAI
SAINT TETSUMONKAI
SAINT SHINNYOKAI


And in order to inherit Kukai's dying wish, many self-mummifiers have "Kai" in their name.
The Shugendo practitioners that believed this legend would fast from food and drink mercury and lacquer, seeking self-mummification.


Therefore, the Shugendo practitioners deliberately ate these leaves...
And speaking of mercury, the leaves of the "Nagi" tree, a time-honored sacred tree, contain trace amounts of mercury.


And some say that "Mt. Nagi", on the border between Okayama and Tottori, was named by the Shugendo practitioners, as a mountain of the Nagi tree...

So that area might be the origin of Japanese ironworks and Shugendo.
That's interesting... Because the entire region around Mt. Nagi became the Province of Mimasaka.


Strangely enough, Professor Munakata seems oddly happy. So does Dr. Imibe...

Uh... Yeah.
...Do Professor Munakata and Dr. Imibe always bounce off each other like that?

I can't follow them...
Could that be an expression of friendship... or affection, even?

I thought Dr. Imibe seemed a little strange, so I called her previous editor from a woman's magazine.

And it seems like every month, around the full moon, Dr Imibe...

The full moon?

No, not that ...

Shhhh! Shhhh!

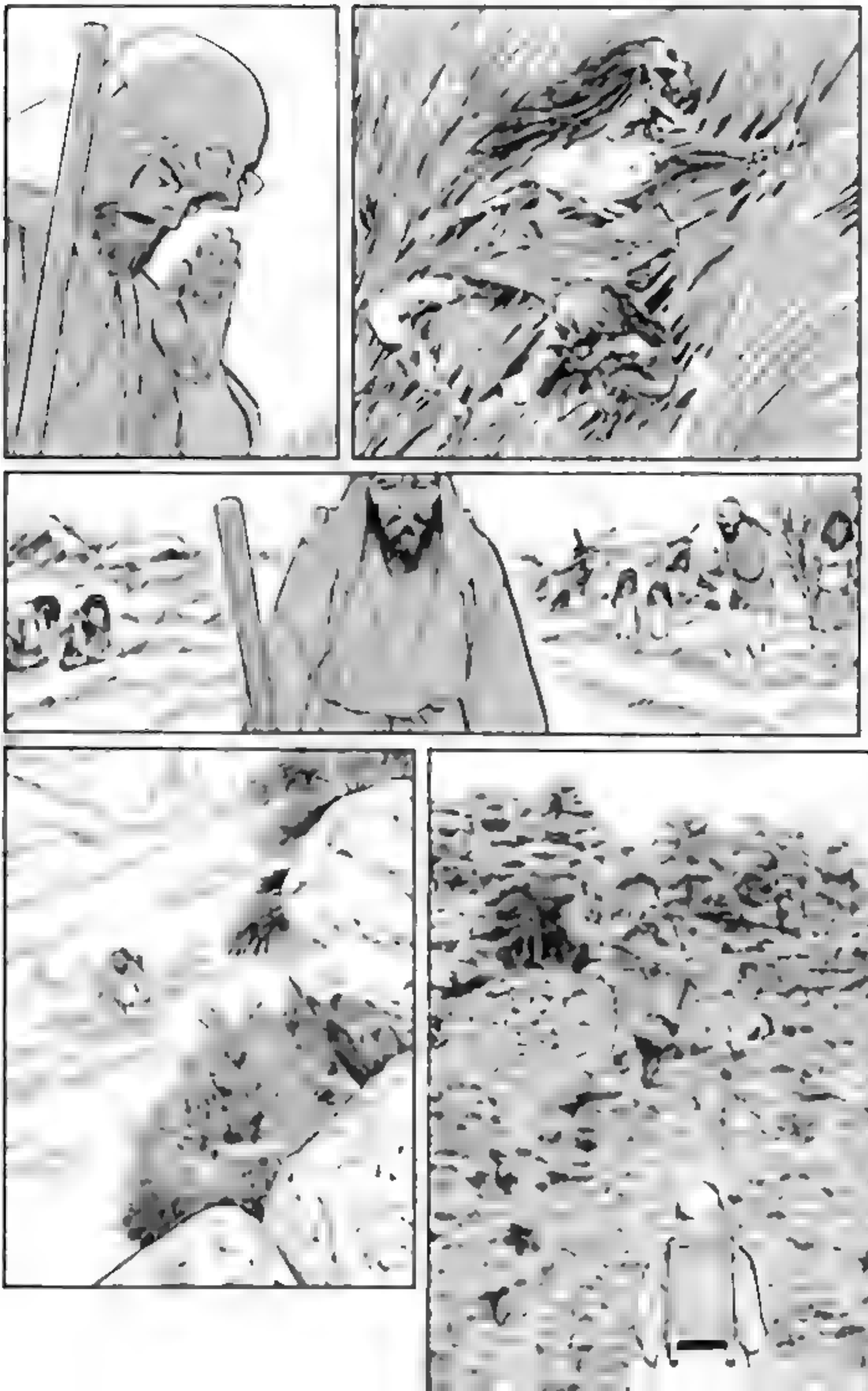
SHE STARTS OVU-LATING !?

Hmm ...

Though it can often lead to strange behav-ior...

Her senses are heightened and her imagination is improved, so she can write especially well in those times.

I suppose that's a sign that she bears the blood of ancient ritualist Inbe clan...



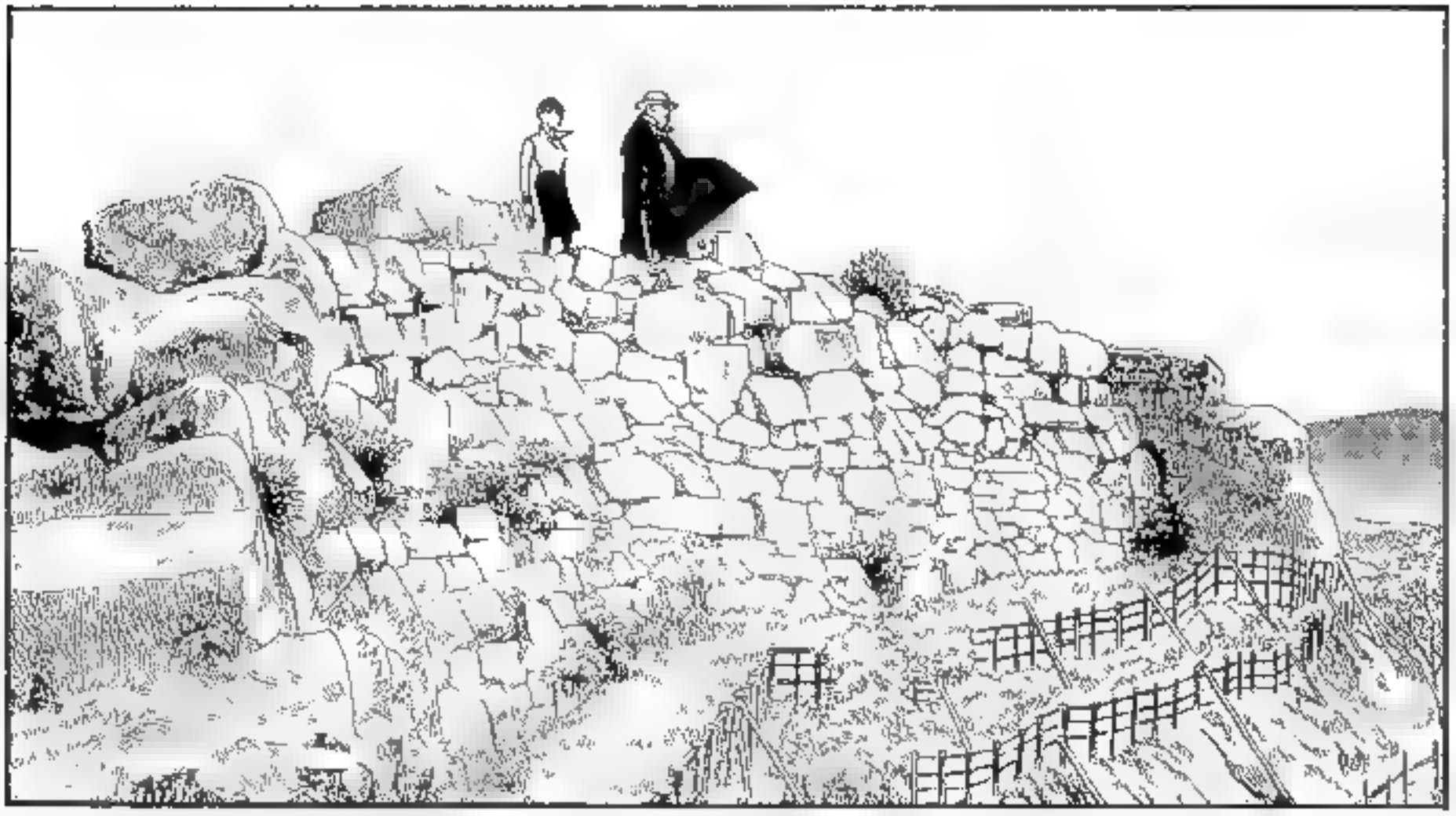
He was supposed to be dug back out after his mummification, but for some reason, he was forgotten...

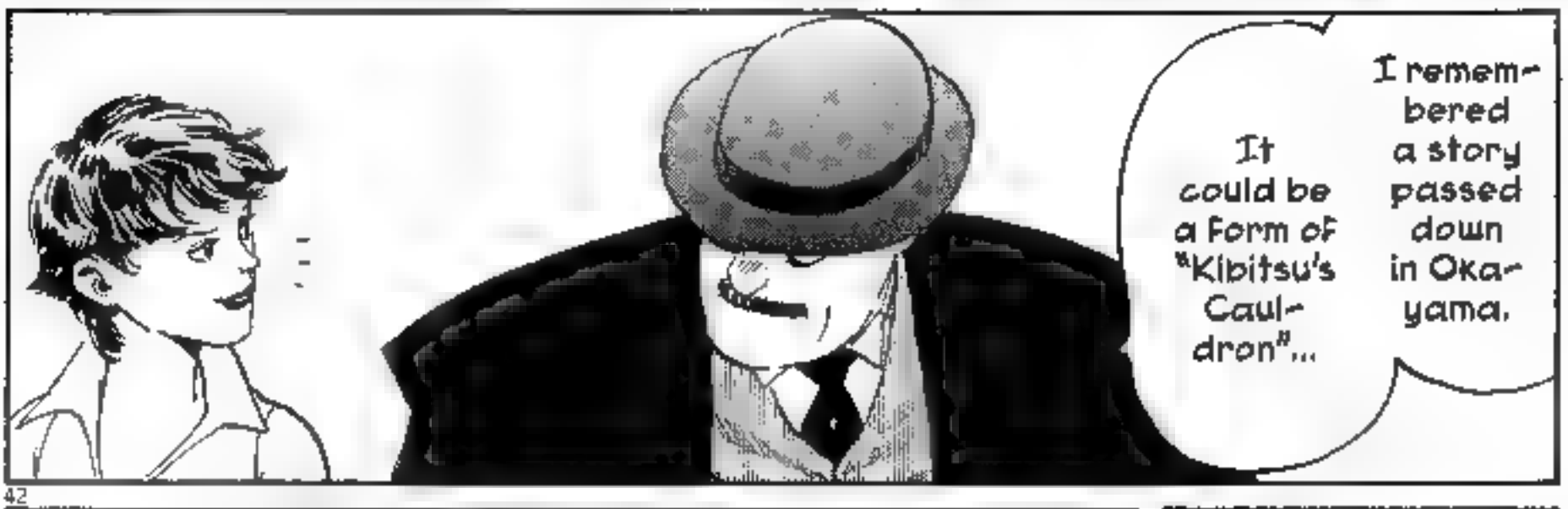
.....

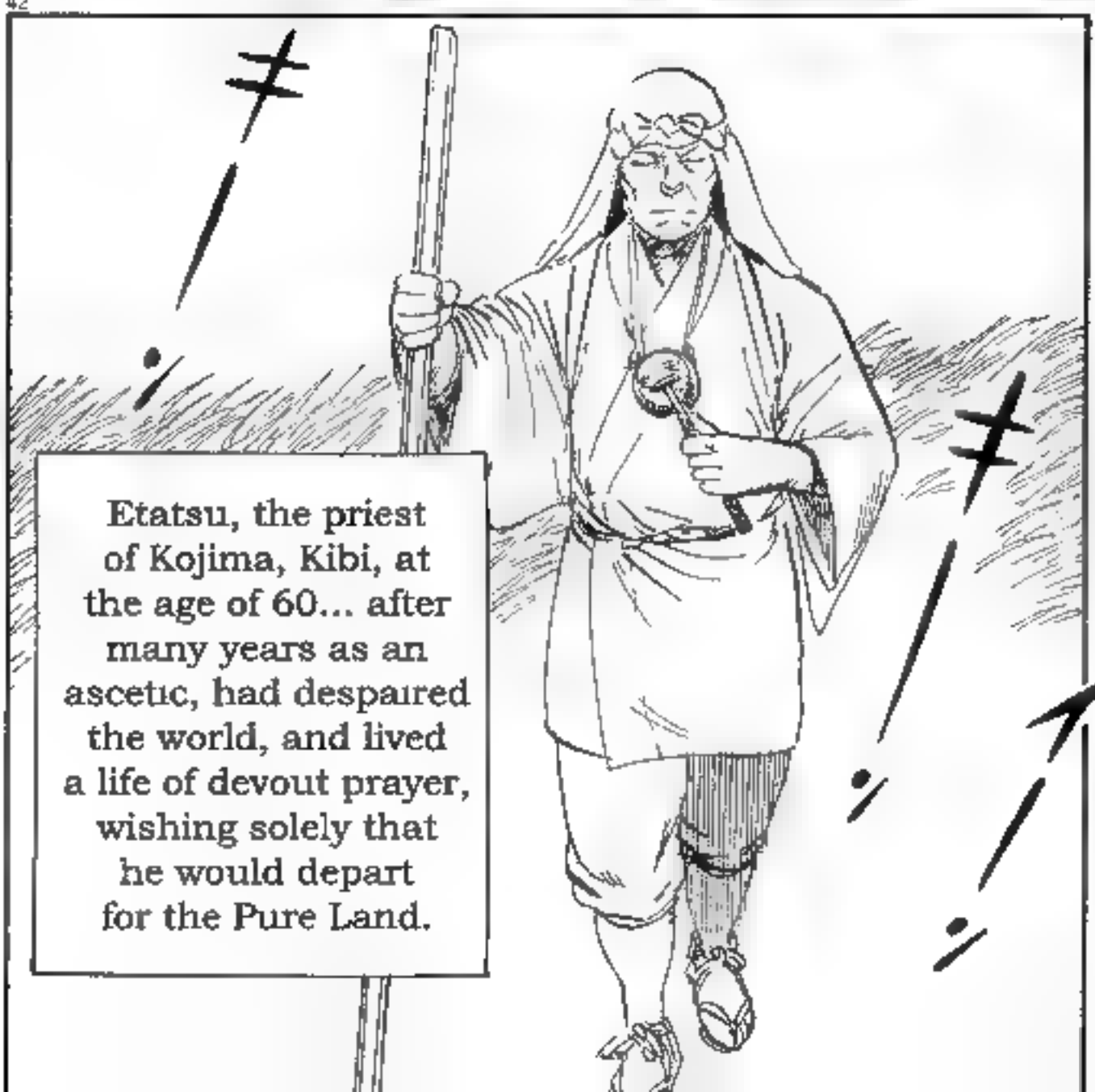
As the prosperity of the kingdom of Kibi was lost, this man may have aspired to self-mummification to save the people's souls.

I can't help but feel that this self-mummification resonates with "Kibitsu's Cauldron"... Let me write something down.

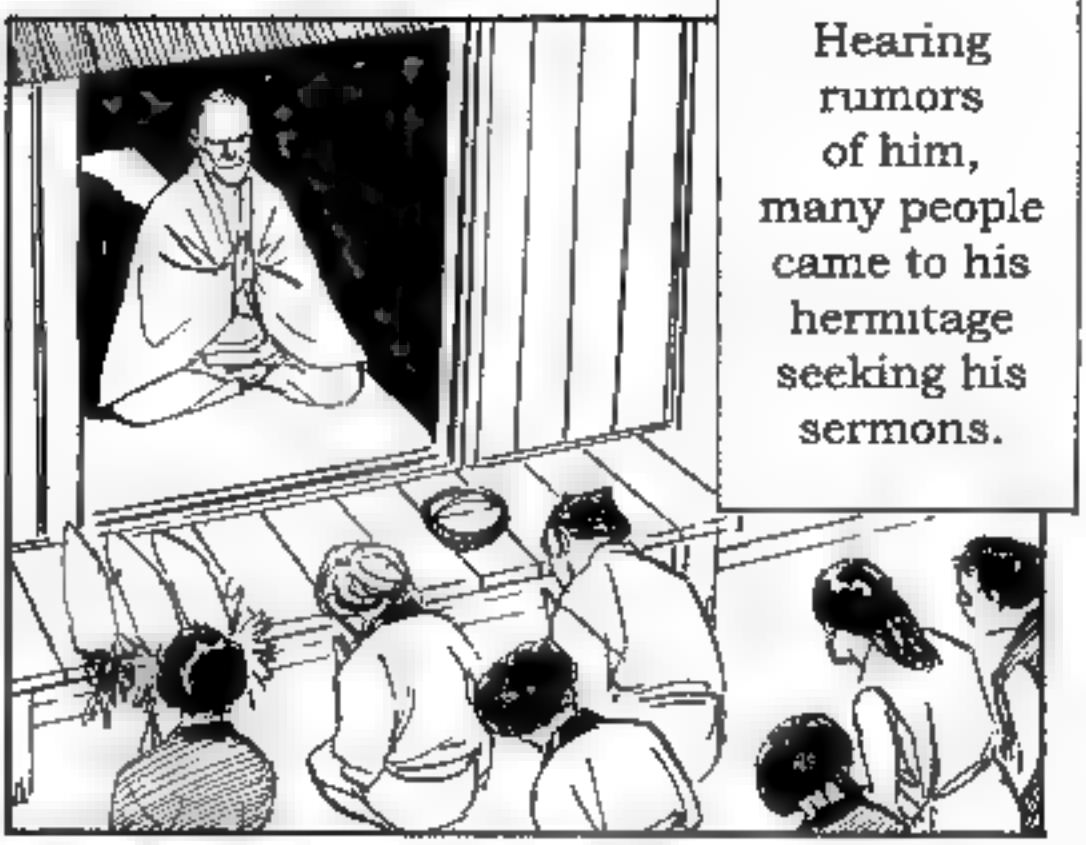
A... Al-right.





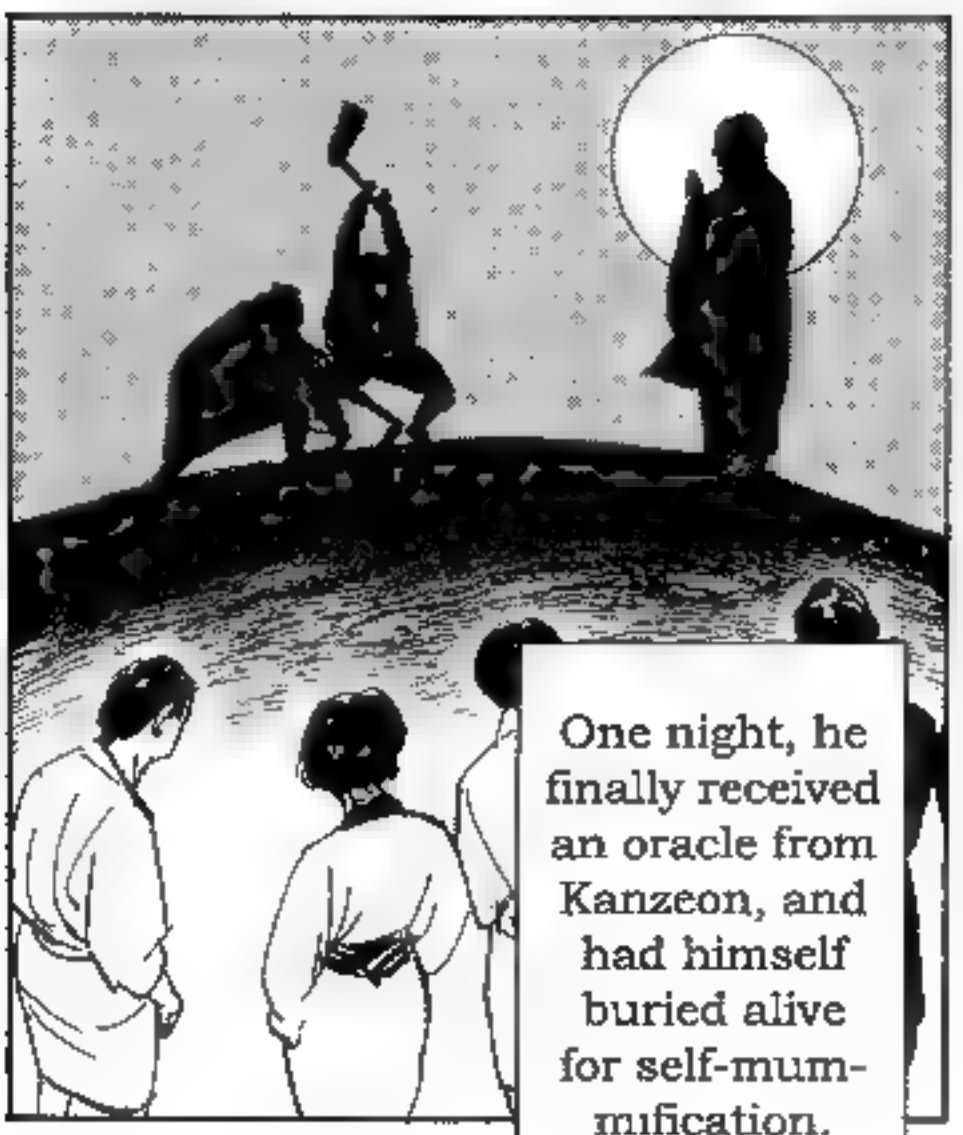


Etatsu, the priest of Kojima, Kibi, at the age of 60... after many years as an ascetic, had despaired the world, and lived a life of devout prayer, wishing solely that he would depart for the Pure Land.



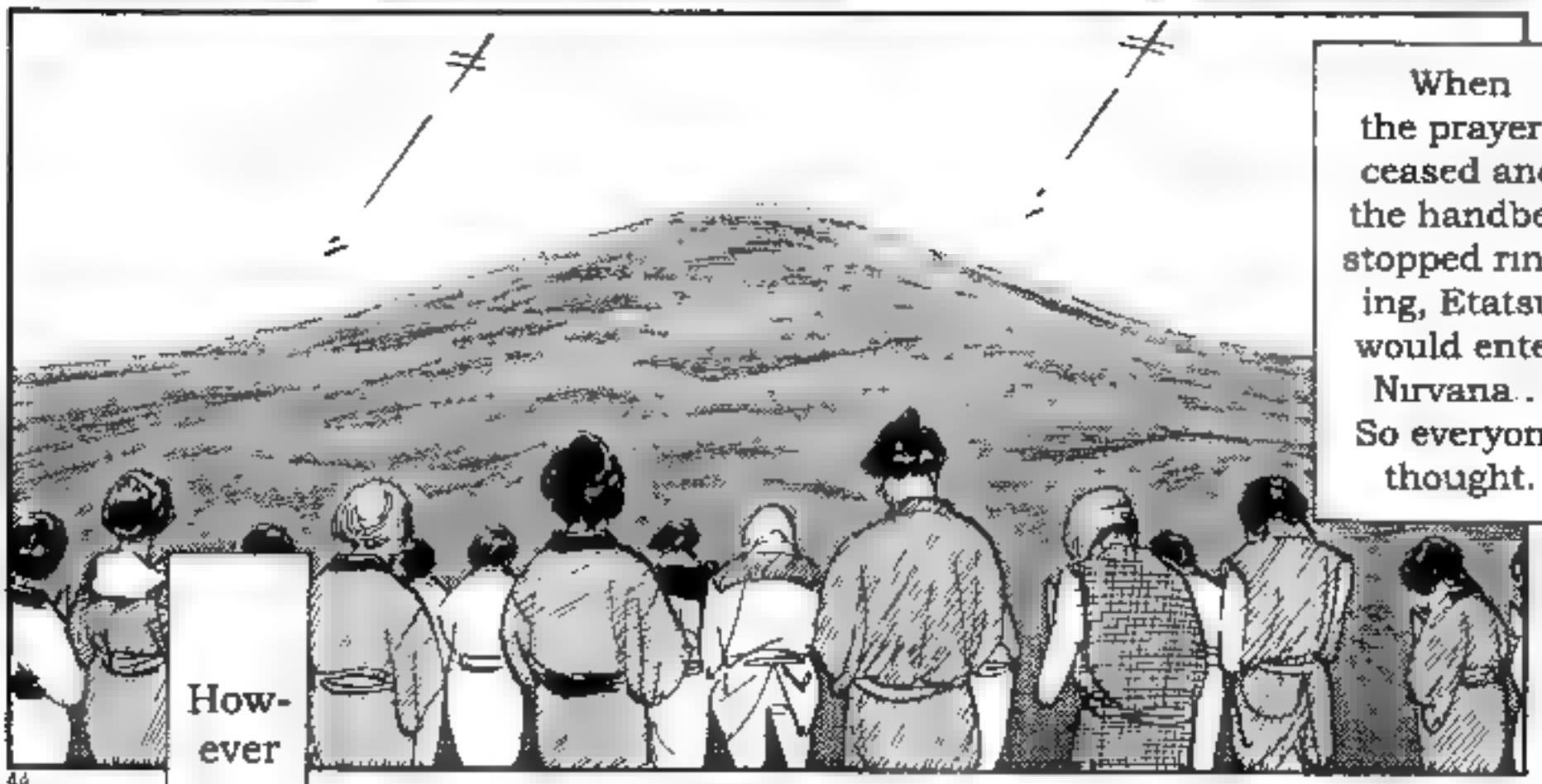
Hearing rumors of him, many people came to his hermitage seeking his sermons.

Among them was a beautiful maiden, who clung to Etatsu, crying and begging for the Ten Prayers*.



One night, he finally received an oracle from Kanzeon, and had himself buried alive for self-mummification.

*To chant the Buddha's name for another


When the prayers ceased and the handbell stopped ringing, Etatsu would enter Nirvana. So everyone thought.
How-ever ...

Months passed, then years passed, and still the prayers and handbell would not cease

Thus continued for fifty-five long years, until few even knew the reason that the hill was called the Mound of Prayer.

Yet Etatsu still lived .. !!

Let me see her beautiful face again

That maiden That maiden is weighing on my mind and keeping me from Nirvana...

They asked the elders, who finally found the maiden from fifty-five years ago.

He hehe ...
Heh!

I see...

I really like this story...

Men and women ...

in Kibi-tsu's Caul-dron...

yielding all kinds of *moans*,

Only the sealed passions of men boil over,

The Case Records of Professor Munakata – Collection 7 END

これらの作品はフィクションです。
実在の団体・人物・事件などには
一切関係ありません。

◎初出一覧◎

赤の記憶

『ビッグコミック』2007年2月25日号、3月10日号、3月25日号

◈

砂鉄八犬伝

『ビッグコミック』2007年4月10日号、4月25日号、5月10日号、5月25日号

◈

吉備津の釜

『ビッグコミック』2007年8月25日号、9月10日号

◎参考資料・協力◎

会津美里町教育委員会／『増補 日本のミイラ仏』松本昭・著（藤川書店）
『真言密教の本 空海伝説の謎と即身成仏の秘密』（学習研究社）／『生身の大師』（高野山宝亀院蔵）

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THE CASE BOOKS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

CHAPTER 22
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